MISS MAYO'S
MOTHER INDIA
A REJOINDER

BY

K. NATARAJAN

Editor "The Indian Social Reformer."

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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FIRST EDITION.

G. A. NATESAN & CO., MADRAS

PRICE ANNAS 12.

INTRODUCTION

Mr. K. Natarajan, the cultured and talented Editor of the *Indian Social Reformer*. has done a public service in subjecting Miss Mayo's "Mother India" to a close and critical examination in a series of articles in his well-known Weekly. They are collected together under this cover with a view to point out to the public at large, particularly to English and American readers, how Miss Mayo 'betrays her mortal aversion to things Indian,' and how her 'aversion is rooted in ignorance'. Mr. Natarajan rightly points out that Miss Mayo's purpose is 'really political and racial' and 'sanitary science merely a pretext.' She is a 'purblind propagandist', with a 'fanatic frenzy for the superiority and supremacy of the whites', trying to find a 'justification for the perpetuation of the white domination and pour contempt on the national character and aspirations of the Indian people.' The whole structure of Miss Mayo's book is 'an imitation of the scenario of a cinema show'. Mr. Natarajan subjects Miss Mayo's remarks about the Hindu social institutions and the Hindu religion to a detailed examination. He charges Miss Mayo with 'freely indulging in half-truths and even

untruths without any attempt to verify the and shows how in quoting authorities sı leaves out 'everything that does not suit hei purpose'. He warns the readers of Mis Mayo's book 'to be constantly on their guar against accepting without verification her stat ments'. 'She is a witness who takes liberties with truths', a statement confirmed by the Rev. H. A. Popley, Lala Lajpat Rai, Dr. Mar-garet Balfour, Sir Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi which form valuable appen-dices to this book. Sir Rabindranath Tagore, whom Miss Mayo has quoted, draws pointed attention to the 'numerous lies mixed with f s that have been dexterously manipulated by l. r' and accuses her of 'deliberately untruthfu irresponsibility' and of 'indulging in a malici-ous piece of fabrication'. Mahatma Gandh who has been a victim in the same direction a Miss Mayo's hands compares her book to 'the report of a drain Inspector sent out with the one purpose of opening and examining the drains of the country to be reported upon, or to give a graphic description of the stench exhuded by the opened drains.' He charges her with taking liberty with his writings and avers that she is 'without doubt untruthful.'

Mr. Natarajan, like other Indians, feels parti-cularly indignant about the degrading accusa-tions of Miss Mayo against the mothers of

ia, their daughters and sons and above all r religion.

'Any one who knows the high honour in which motherhood and mothers are held in India will have no hesitation in describing Miss Mayo's statement as a frigid, calculated lie. India may forgive Miss Mayo many things, but this cowardly assault on the honour of her mothers, never. This single statement alone brands Miss Katherine Mayo, but it is needless to say more.'

If any one thinks that this criticism of the or is in any way strong and undeserved he only to remember that Mr. Natarajan, the litor of the *Indian Social Reformer*, is high caste South Indian Brahmin who has r over forty years been an ardent social former. Indeed he was a reformer when e term was one of reproach, and he has en living the life he has all along been eaching. As one of the founders and later on r years, as the Editor of the INDIAN SOCIAL EFORMER, he has been week after week pleadng strongly for 'the abolition of child-marriage, nforced widowhood, and dedication of women s devadasis, purity, total abstinence, removal caste restrictions on sea-voyage, interining and inter-marriage, the removal of unuchability, women's education, the abolition f animal sacrifices' etc.

In advocating these social and religious reforms in the Hindu Community he has displayed singular courage, self-sacrifice and devotion to the cause which has been to him a sacred one. And he has been associated for years in this great and noble work with such honoured men as Malabari, Bhandarkar, Ranade, Telang, Chandavarkar and a host of other distinguished Indians who have played no insignificant part in all the movements for the uplift of the Hindu society. Well therefore might he exclaim, 'Miss Mayo is nearly impertinent when she says that Indians are afraid to face the ugly facts in their social life'.

> 'India must go about her Reforms in her own way in keeping with the historic continuity of her culture and civilisation. She will not be bullied into it by the calumnies of a Miss Katherine Mayo. Our right to criticise and condemn the evils of our society and to plead with our people for reform carries with it a corresponding duty to defend them against interested and malicious calumny such as Miss Katherine Mayo's.'

India, her people and her religion have been the victims of misrepresentation at the hands of many interested aliens on many an occasion in the past. But in deliberate suppression of truth, perversion of facts and down-right allegations against Indian charac-

ter and Indian Institutions, Miss Mayo beats the record. And her distorted account of India (for which has mischievously been secured a wide and unprecedented publicity not only in America but also in England) at this time when the Indian people are fighting for self-Government and self-determination has, according to some well informed critics, a deliberate political purpose behind it. Many a long and well-tried friend of India speaks and writes about the mischief of Miss Mayo's book. If this exposure of 'an atrocious injustice to an ancient people' will go to some extent at least in removing 'the malignant contagion of race hatred' that has been propagated by Miss Mayo's writings, the writer and the Publisher will feel amply rewarded.

MADRAS: *Dec.* 1927. G. A. NATESAN.

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MISS MAYO'S "MOTHER INDIA"
A REJOINDER

—o—

I

MISS Katherine Mayo has divided her book into five parts, composed of five to seven chapters each. Each part is ushered in with an "interlude," that to the first chapter being called an "introduction." The "introduction" to the first part bears the explanatory title, "The Bus to Mandalay." All the eight pages of this "introduction," however, are devoted to the description of the temple of Kali in Calcutta and there is not a word about Mandalay. The explanatory heading, therefore, is unintelligible except on the supposition that Miss Mayo's notion of geography got somewhat mixed when she sat down to write this book. There is something about a bus, but there is nothing about Mandalay. Perhaps, Miss Mayo intended that the Bengalee youth

whom she saw in Calcutta are destined some time or other to be deported to Mandalay.

In the very first paragraph of this "introduction" the author betrays her mortal aversion to things Indian. She contrasts European and modern Calcutta with "the Indian town of temples, mosques, bazaars, and intricate court-yards and alleys, that has somehow created itself despite the rectangular lines shown on the map." Here we see how her aversion is rooted in her ignorance. A town, even an "Indian town," does not "somehow" create itself. It is slowly, gradually, evolved in response to the needs of the people, and, to the trained eye of the sociologist, it reveals the story of many generations, it may be centuries. If you go to Nasik and look at the Indian town from the Tapovan bank of the Godavari, you can distinctly trace four or five townships one below the other, the lowest and the most recent being closest to the river. It is plain as plain can be that the dominating factor in the evolution of Nasik is easy access to the river on which it depends for its water. As the river

cut deeper and deeper into the rock in the course of centuries, the town had perforce to descend lower and lower so as not to put too great a strain upon the women who, after their daily bath, had to carry water home for kitchen and drinking purposes. The last words of her sentence indicate that Miss Mayo is under a misconception. She seems to think that the town was made from the map, which is of course the reverse of the fact. The town existed long before the map was drawn.

In the very next sentence again Miss Mayo betrays her bitter animus. She is not content to state the facts and let the reader draw his own conclusions, or at least to state all her facts and reserve her comments to the last. The very second sentence of the very first chapter of her book speaks of "many little bookstalls where narrow-chested, anaemic, young Indian students, in native dress, brood over piles of fly-blown Russian pamphlets." This writer has seen Calcutta at fairly close quarters not once but several times, but this is not the picture of the Indian town which arises

to his mind. Unkind strangers often call the Bengali Babu oleaginous but not anaemic. In her description of Bengali youth she is merely repeating the Anglo-Indian conception of political enthusiasts as decadents. As a matter of fact, Young Bengal since the days of the Partition has paid particular attention to its physical fitness—an example that is being followed all over the country.

As for "fly-blown Russian pamphlets," if Miss Mayo means they were written in Russian we do not think that one out of a thousand Calcutta students can read that language, and the Soviet propaganda head-quarters must be run by incredible fools to waste its money in sending piles of pamphlets to India. Miss Mayo, perhaps, means that they were written in English but of Russian origin. Even in that case, however, her statement requires verification as the Government of India have proscribed all publications having a communist complexion, under the Post Office and Sea Customs Acts. If some, nevertheless, managed to evade the prohibition, it is hardly credible that

they could be exhibited in piles in little book-stalls all over Indian Calcutta for students to brood over. Why then does Miss Mayo indulge in this bit of palpable fiction? The answer is obvious. The word "Russian" is like a red rag to a bull to the English-speaking world, and Miss Mayo's purpose is from first to last to excite prejudice as much as possible in order to make her readers receptive to her horrors. The whole structure of her book is an imitation of the scenario of a cinema show.

The first place Miss Mayo goes to in Calcutta, or at any rate sees fit to describe by way of introduction, is not the Bethune College, or the Brahmo Samaj, or Sir J. C. Bose's world-famous laboratory, or the College of Science of Sir P. C. Ray, or the University where Professors Raman and Radhakrishnan pursue their researches in Science and Philosophy. These places do not suit her purpose. It is the Kalighat Temple which is one of the very few important temples in India where animals are still sacrificed, that she pitches upon for her opening view of India. The importance of

Kalighat is purely local. It is not like the great shrines at Benares, Jagannath, Rameshwaram, Madura, Shrirangam, Nasik, Dwarka, Muttra, Brindaban, Allahabad, Hardwar and Amritsar, of all-India sanctity. Yet Miss Mayo deliberately leaves aside all these temples, some of which are far more imposing even from an architectural point of view, to hunt up the gruesome holocaust at Kalighat, which she describes with disgusting detail.

And yet what happens in Kalighat to-day, was of daily occurrence, perhaps on a larger scale, at the temple of Jerusalem when Jesus Christ taught in its temple porches. Let us in this connection quote a few lines from the recent book on Paul by the anonymous author of "By an Unknown Disciple":

"It all flooded back into Paul's mind. It had begun with the hot, savage smell of blood. In spite of the efforts of the priests to keep everything reasonably clean, and inspite of the half-yearly whitening of the unhewn stones, that horrible smell of mingled blood and burnt fat hung everywhere near the Altar of Sacrifice. Even when you avoided the benches near the east fire on which the offerings were burnt, a wind from the hills might blow the smell right round the colonnade. Paul could see it all: the great smouldering fire with bits of half-burnt flesh and bones and ashes all tidily raked together; the lamb tightly held with

its legs bunched together like a water-bag; the fingers of the sacrificing priest searching for its windpipe, and the bend forward of the attendant priest with the pointed silver vessel into which the blood would squirt from the cut throat of the victim. Then the sprinkling of the blood, the marble tables piled with flesh and fat and cleaned entrails, the great heap of salt, the splashes of blood on the white garments of the priests and their bare feet blood speckled too...as they walked up and down the salt-strewn causeway to the altar. All his life worship in the Temple had been associated with that smell, and with the bleating of sheep and the cries of the kids tied to the gold rings ready for sacrifice."—*Paul the Jew*. Pages 8-9.

We do not say this in justification of Kalighat. On the contrary, with the light of *Ahimsa* about her feet, India is more greatly guilty of tolerating the sacrifice of dumb animals in the name of religion. But that is not Miss Mayo's point. She and others have accepted Judaism as an ethical religion, notwithstanding that this daily holocaust of dumb animals was a part of its daily ritual at the time when it flourished in its native soil. For aught we know, but for the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem, these sacrifices would be going on to-day, because the Jews are as tenacious of old land-marks as the Hindus. And yet when in a land, where Buddha lived and taught

and Jainism is a living faith, and where Vedic sacrifices have been totally abolished from Hinduism, a few Kali temples from historic causes retain this barbarous custom, Miss Katherine Mayo shrieks herself hoarse over the iniquities of Hinduism and the Hindus! And one word more. Let us talk commonsense. Miss Mayo, is horrified at the slaughter of affrighted goats in the Kalighat Temple. But, Miss Mayo, has it ever occurred to you that thousands of goats and sheep, and cows and bulls, and pigs are daily killed in the worship of the great belly-god in Europe and America? Miss Mayo will do well to read her *St. Mathew* again:

" Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter; but within they are full of extortion and excess.

Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness.

Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." —*Mathew, Ch. XXIII.—25-29.*

II

We are under a special obligation to sift the facts in Miss Katherine Mayo's book because this journal was started and has ever had for its main purpose the reform of the social evils which figure so prominently in it. The need for a special journal to deal with social reform was felt acutely during the fierce Age of Consent agitation of 1890 when the REFORMER was launched into existence. The abolition of child-marriage, enforced widowhood, and dedication of women as devadasis, purity, total abstinence, removal of caste restrictions on sea-voyage, inter-dining and inter-marriage, the removal of untouchability, women's education, the abolition of animal sacrifices—all these and other social and moral reforms have been advocated and, in some cases, initiated by this paper. In the work of Indian reform propaganda, Christian missionaries of the more broad-minded type, have gladly co-operated with Indian reformers, though the less broad-minded have held aloof on the ground that

there was no hope for the people of India unless they were converted to Christianity. Government,as a whole, have not been very helpful, and when it came to legislation, they have almost invariably thrown their weight on the side of the *status quo*. The social reform movement, it may indeed be said, has had to work without any countenance from officials, although at the outset and for many years, social reformers were represented by their opponents as playing the game of the bureaucracy and Christian missionaries.

The moral influence of the European is, for various reasons, no longer what it used to be, but it is still not altogether extinct. When Dr. Besant first came to India, she delivered a lecture on the Madras maidan on Hinduism. The venerable social reform leader, Dewan Bahadur R. Raghunath Rao, presided. At the end of her lecture, the old veteran said with just a tinge of bitterness: "Gentlemen, I have been saying these same things for the last thirty years, but now that a white lady has spoken of them, I hope they will receive more

attention from you." Miss Katherine Mayo could have given a helpful impetus in the same direction, had she written her book in the spirit of understanding and sympathy which should actuate every reformer, and not of ill-informed censoriousness which vitiates it throughout. The reformer must above all things guard against exaggeration. Under-statement helps, while over-statement irretrievably injures a good cause. Not only has Miss Katherine Mayo grossly exaggerated the extent and nature of actual evils but she has, as we shall show, freely indulged in half-truths and even untruths without any attempt to verify them. She has thus done a distinct disservice to the cause in whose interests she professes, no doubt sincerely, to have written it. Her worst sin, from the point of view of the reformer, is that she has branded the Indian people as a congenitally imbecile race for which the only hope lies in extinction. If the Indian people are what she holds them to be, it is manifestly absurd to expect them "to pull out with both hands" the evils which ac-

cording to her, are at the root of their existence.

The book, in the most charitable view, is the product of a fanatic frenzy for the superiority and supremacy of the whites. The author begins by professing a purely scientific and sanitary object in writing the book, detached entirely from politics and religion. But she is too eager and impetuous to keep up this pretence even to the end of the first chapter. Her "Argument"—as this chapter is called—makes it plain that she came to India determined to see the kind of things that she says she has seen, to hear the things she says she has heard. It is nonsense to say, as she does, that America was without any means of information about India and that is why she thought of writing her book. Besides the large number of American missionaries who have been working in many parts of the country for over half a century, several distinguished American scholars and publicists have written on India with much fuller knowledge and, consequently, deeper insight and under-

standing about things Indian. By far the best book on the religions of India by a non-Indian is one written by an American scholar. There are several others, and their number is on the increase. We notice with regret in some of the criticisms of Miss Mayo's book in the Indian press a tendency to generalise about the American attitude to India. This is quite wrong. We have kept ourselves in fairly close touch with American thought on India, and we have no hesitation in saying that Miss Mayo's book is a freak—an exception to the high general level of understanding and insight.

Before coming to India, Miss Katherine Mayo called at the India Office in London, she says, a complete stranger, and stated her plan. We quote her own words, as to what happened there :—

"What would you like us to do for you," asked the gentlemen who received me.

"Nothing", I answered, "except to believe what I say. A foreign stranger prying about India, not studying ancient architecture, not seeking philosophers or poets, not even hunt-

-ing big game, and commissioned by no one, anywhere, may seem a queer figure. Especially if that stranger develops an acute tendency to ask questions. I should like it to be accepted that I am neither an idle busybody nor a political agent, but merely an ordinary American citizen seeking test facts to lay before my own people." She had introductions from the India Office. India Offices do not give introductions to complete strangers!

"But whatever you do, be careful not to generalize," the British urged. (We are still quoting Miss Mayo.) "In this huge country little or nothing is everywhere true. Madras and Peshawar, Bombay and Calcutta—attribute the things of one of these to any one of the others, and *you are out of court.*" (Italics are ours).

Whatever Miss Mayo might have thought, the India Office thoroughly understood that here was a volunteer with her pen to champion British rule against Indian politicals. The fact that she was an American was a point in her favour. Englishmen, even the most

ignorant and bigoted of them, cannot in decency claim for their rule the absolute immunity, which a foreigner can, from all responsibility for whatever is ugly and of ill-report in the condition of the people whom they have governed for nearly two centuries. The India Office gentlemen were afraid that Miss Mayo's zeal might outrun her discretion, and that she would put herself out of court by mixing up Madras with Peshawar, Calcutta with Bombay. In some future "Recollections" of one of those gentlemen of the India Office, we may come across an entry to the following effect: "October 10, 1925. Had a strange visitor. A female Yankee who whole-heartedly believes in the mission of her country, and of herself in particular, to save civilization. She has, it seems, written a book proving to her own satisfaction that the Fillipinos are an effete race and that Providence has ordained that America should dominate them. She is anxious to do the same service to us in India, as a labour of love. Only difficulty is she does not know anything of India except that

Gandhi lives there and tigers. She has a very confused idea even of Indian geography—thinks Madras is the capital of the Frontier province and Peshawar is a town in East Bengal. Warned her that mixing up things in India will put her out of court. Suggested that she will be wise to tread, if she must, gently on Mussalman toes, and that Madras Brahmins and Bengalee Babus are our main trouble. Am sure her book will be not much to speak of; but we have given women votes in this country and Miss Mayo's thesis about the oppression of Indian women by their own men, may have an electoral value. At any rate, it may help to divert Indian politicians for a while, and that is something gained."

In her very first chapter Miss Mayo unfolds her real purpose which is political and racial and sanitary science merely the pretext. "The British administration of India, be it good, bad or indifferent, has nothing whatever to do with the conditions indicated." (p. 24. *Our references throughout are to the English edition*). The cat is here out of the bag, and continues

mewing to the end of the book. "Whether British or Russians or Japanese sit in the seat of the highest . . . . . . the only power that can hasten the pace of freedom, is the power o the men of India facing and attacking the task that awaits them in their own bodies and souls." (p. 25). This last statement will be cordially endorsed by every Indian. Only, he cannot help asking, why should there be a British administration at all, since he alone can redeem his people. The matter does not end there. An administration must be a help or it must be a hindrance to national redemption. If it is not the one it must be the other. Absorbing a large part of the national income, controlling all avenues of economic and political life, it cannot be regarded as an indifferent and unresponsible spectator of the peoples' life. That is why Mahatma Gandhi's indictment charging British Rule for Indian helplessness and lack of initiative and originality, has much point to it and is not the imbecile whining which Miss Katherine Mayo makes it out to be. That is

why most Indians feel that not till India's destiny is controlled by Indian hands—the British need not abdicate and go, but may remain and help—can there be any chance of a solid programme of reform being steadily put into effect, as has been done in Japan, and as is being done in Turkey. A shrewd English reviewer, who holds that Hinduism is beneath contempt—which only means that his knowledge of it is—is obliged to say that Miss Mayo "lost her case," which he considers a strong one, "when she wove into it a bitter conviction that the white man's rule is so overwhelmingly good for inferior breeds that it is only wickedness that makes them dissatisfied." (Edward Thompson in the *Nation and Athenæum*, july 30).

While Miss Katherine Mayo in her first chapter affirms that Indians alone can work out their redemption, in the second chapter she maintains that Indians in the nature of things cannot help themselves. "The whole pyramid of the Indian's woes, material and spiritual,··· rests upon a rock-bottom physical base. This

base is, simply, his manner of getting into the world, and his sex-life thenceforward." (p. 39) It is with this statement, and the facts or supposed facts by which she supports it, that we are chiefly concerned. It is not easy to disentangle Miss Katherine Mayo's facts from her inferences. Either deliberately or from sheer perversity they constantly get confused with each other. Miss Mayo has no sense of history which she invents to suit her argument as she goes along. Her thoughts, indeed, have no background. She is constantly involving herself and her readers in "the fallacy of many questions," of which the stock example in the text-books is: "Have you left off beating your mother, yes or no?" If the answer is "yes," it means that you were in the habit of thrashing your mother. If it is "no," it means that you are still persisting in it. It is of such questions that Tennyson wrote the familiar lines:

> **That a lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies,**
>
> **That a lie which is all a lie may be met and fought with outright,**
>
> **But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to fight.**

Miss Katherine Mayo's book is built upon such half-truths.

All her comments on and about child-marriage—including the unpardonable perversion of Rabindra Nath Tagore's article in Keyserling's "Marriage"—are based on the assumption that the marriage rite among Hindus means the same thing as it does among Europeans; whereas, the fact is that in the Indian sense it is really a betrothal, but a betrothal having the binding effect of marriage. The consummation may be and is usually put off till after the girl attains puberty. Over the greater part of India this is the long-established practice. In a few parts of the country, particularly those which have longest been under foreign rule, unfortunately, this healthy interval had come to be curtailed or even eliminated. It is an axiom of sociology that no institution, especially, in ancient communities came into existence except under the pressure of a felt and much-felt need. What the need in this case was it is difficult to say but it is known that in the early days of Mahomedan conquest,

a consummated marriage afforded a protection to girls which nothing else did. The Age of Consent was raised to 12 in 1890, and to 13 two years ago. During the last half-century the age of marriage of girls has slowly but steadily been on the increase ; and we are convinced that early consummation of child-marrige is at the present day an exception and not the rule even in those parts where it was common thirty years ago.

III

Miss Katherine Mayo's thesis is that India owes her miseries not to British rule but to her own religious, social, and sexual perversions. " The whole pyramid of the Indian's woes, material and spiritual, rests upon a rock-bottom physical base. This base is, simply, his manner of getting into the world and his sex-life thenceforward." Let us take up, first, the point about the Indian's manner of getting into life. We shall let Miss Katherine Mayo explain what she means by it : " Take a girl

child twelve years old, a pitiful physical specimen in bone and blood, illiterate, ignorant, without any sort of training in habits of health. Force motherhood upon her at the earliest possible moment etc." (P. 24) Then again: "The Indian girl, in common practice, looks for motherhood nine months after reaching puberty—or anywhere between the ages of fourteen and eight. The latter age is extreme, although in some cases, not exceptional, the former is well above the average. Because of her years and upbringing and because countless generations behind her have been bred even as she, she is frail of body. She is also completely unlettered, her stock of knowledge comprising only the ritual of worship of the household idols, the rites of placation of the wrath of deities and evil spirits, and the detailed ceremony of the service of her husband, who is ritualistically her personal god." p. 30). The ignorance, illiteracy, almost religious devotion to the husband and superstition of the Hindu wife are really irrelevant to Miss Mayo's indictment of the Indian's "manner of

getting into the world." Many of the world's greatest mothers have been just as ignorant, illiterate, superstitious and husband-lovers as the bulk of the women of India. It has always seemed to us that the picture of the Hebrew matron can be applied almost word for word to the Indian mother and wife.

"Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies.

The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.

She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.

She is like the merchant's ship; she bringeth her food from afar.

She riseth also while it is yet night; and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.

She considereth a field, and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.

She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.

She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night.

She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.

She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.

Her husband is known in the gates, where he sitteth among the elders of the land.

She maketh fine linen and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.

Strength and honor are her clothing and she shall rejoice in time to come.

She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her"—(*Proverbs*: Ch., XXXI.-10-28).

The Hebrew woman like the Hindu woman did not know how to read or write. Neither did the woman of ancient Greece and Rome. There is, no doubt, a wide gulf between the Hindu woman's feeling for her husband and the American woman's. Some one wrote the other day that when it is no uncommon thing for a woman to have five husbands in eight years, the term 'marriage' ceases to have any meaning. But are we quite sure that the American marriage is an improvement on the Hindu? Keyserling writes:

"The possibility of remarrying every year ruins marriage much more fundamentally than even the most frequent practice of adultery, for the latter does not at all affect marriage as such, but only offends against certain of its components, whereas divorce lays an axe at its roots. If the poles are continually changed, a durable state of tension cannot develop or endure. Consequently, such American women as

possess this characteristic are, as types, either Amazons or courtesans, and the men, as husbands, appear subjugated to such an extent as is otherwise found only in polyandrous communities.''—(*The Book of Marriage*, p. 26).

We are far from saying that the Hindu marriage as it has come to be in practice is the ideal of marriage. That is yet to be reached in India as in America. It behoves sensible people, meanwhile, not to throw stones at each other.

We come next to the question of child marriage apart from the literary qualifications of mothers and their regard for their husbands. No one in his senses will defend child marriages. The social reformers of India have been working for years to get rid of them, not without success. The Baroda Marriage Law Reform Committee, whose report was issued last month, stated that child marriages had practically ceased among the higher educated classes. This is also true of British India where the social reform movement has been far more vigorous than in Indian States. But here, again, Miss Katherine Mayo's dictum that a race among which such marriages

prevail is doomed to perpetual servility is easily refuted from history. Child marriages were common among ancient Greeks and Romans, and among the Hebrews. Jesus Christ was born of an "espoused wife" whose marriage with Joseph had not been consummated. We reproduced in the *Reformer* of March 27, 1926, a review of a book entitled "Home Life under the Stuarts" by Elizabeth Godfrey, which shows that child marriages were common in England about the time of the Pilgrim Fathers many of whom were, perhaps, born of girl-mothers. The following passage was quoted from the book:—

> "It was exceptional for marriage to take place absolutely in the nursery, as in the case of little Lady Mary Villiers, not only wife, but widow, before she was nine years old, but it was quite a common thing for a child to be married at thirteen. In that case she was usually given a year or two of education before she lived with her husband, and he, if only about fifteen or sixteen, often went to Oxford after his marriage, or travelled abroad. The large family of the Earl of Cork afforded many instances of these very early marriages. His eldest daughter, Alice, was married to Lord Barrymore when she was thirteen; the second, Sarah, was only twelve when she was contracted to Sir Thomas Moore—indeed, the negotiations were begun when she was but eight. Being left a widow at fourteen she was quickly remarried to one of the Digby family."

The two feeders of Western civilization, as an influence on human character, are the Classics and Christianity. If Miss Katherine Mayo knew, as every educated (and not merely literate) person should, something of the history of her own national civilization and culture, she would have approached her task of interpreting India to America, in a very different spirit.

Let us leave history behind and come to contemporary facts. That early marriages in this country are not necessarily detrimental to physical vigour is the considered opinion of Risley and Gait, the joint authors of the Indian Census Report of 1901. They observe:

"No one who has seen a Punjabi regiment march past, or has watched the sturdy Jat women lift their heavy water-jars at the village well, is likely to have any misgivings as to the effect of their marriage system on the physique of the race. Among the Rajputs both sexes are of slighter build than the Jats, but here again there are no signs of degeneration. The type is different, but that is all." (Report of the Indian census of 1901, p. 433.)

Jats generally marry at from five to seven years of age and Rajputs at fifteen or sixteen or even older: but the Rajput couple begins

at once to co-habit, whereas the parents of the Jat girl often find her so useful at home as she grows up that some pressure has to be put upon them to give her up to her husband, and the result is that, for practical purposes, she begins her married life later than the Rajput bride (quoted from Ibbetson on the same page). The Jat system is the normal system, except in certain limited areas and classes owing, as we pointed out last week, to historical causes, and except in the case of absolutely destitute parents who think that their daughters will be more comfortably provided for in their husband's homes than in their own. Risley and Gait acknowledge that over a great part of India the evils of early consummation are guarded against, as among the Jats. (P. 434.)

Bengal was the principal area where Risley and Gait found prevalent as a rule among the upper classes "the monstrous abuse that the girls of the upper classes commence married life at the age of nine years, and become mothers at the very earliest time that it is physically possible for them to do so." This

is not due to the influence of women's tradition (as they thought) but to the political condition of the province which made a consummated marriage the only safeguard of women's honour. However that may be, much water has flowed under the bridge since 1901, and the fact "that she (Miss Mayo) had to go to a hospital which has a monopoly of such cases in the N. E. of India and could get nothing more up-to-date than forty years ago (she has quoted a dozen cases that were collected in 1891) shows, if it shows anything at all, that such cases are few and far between" (S. S. D. in the *Nation and Athenæum* of August, 6). Owing to the horrible case of a child-wife the age of consent was raised in 1890 from 10 to 12, be it noted, on strong pressure from and with the vigorous support of the Indian reformers, Malabari, Bhandarkar, Ranade, Telang and Chandavarkar. Lord Lansdowne in his speech in the Indian Legislative Council on the Bill generously acknowledged that Government had been greatly encouraged by the strong support accorded by these leaders to

the new legislation. These men, it may be further noted, gave their support on the express ground that the pre-puberty consummation was against the letter and spirit of the authoritative Hindu code. Telang and Bhandarkar were eminent Sanskritists and Ranade was an acknowledged master of Hindu law. It is also fair to the opposition, which was led by Tilak who was also an eminent Sanskritist, to state that the main ground of it was that an alien Government had no right to interfere with the socio-religious life of the people, and that the Police was so ignorant and corrupt that, especially in the rural areas, there was serious danger of oppression and blackmail if it was given power to interfere with the domestic life of the people. The enlargement of the legislature, with an elected Indian majority, has to a large extent met these objections and one of the most gratifying features of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms is the proportionately larger amount of social legislation introduced or passed during the last six years than during the half century previous to them.

The age of consent was raised two years ago to 13 in the case of marriage. There is a strong feeling that this is not enough, and the All-India Women's Conference has taken upon itself the task of organising public opinion in support of Sir Hari Singh Gour's Bill to raise it to 14, which is the limit to which it has been raised as against strangers. The public conscience has been aroused, notwithstanding the Indian's manner of coming into the world, and the last traces of the evil will soon disappear wherever it exists. There can be no more conclusive proof of the fact, illustrated by the history of other lands, that political progress helps forward social reform. It is our considered opinion that the acceleration of self-government in India will accelerate the pace of social progress, and that without it social stagnation is not a distant possibility.

IV

Miss Katherine Mayo wisely refrains from giving statistics regarding the prevalence of child marriage in India. If she had done so, it

would not have helped her to make out, as she has done, that child marriage is nearly universal among Hindus, and that later marriages are the exception. Of 100,000 persons of the female sex in the Indian population of all ages 2,575, or say, 25 per cent. are between 5 and 15 years of age. (Table I, p. 135, *Report of Census*, 1921.) (We leave infants under 5 out of account as there are only 15 in a 1,000 returned under married or widowed. and Miss Mayo herself does not suggest that girls under 5 cohabit with their husbands and are forced into maternity). Among Hindus the female population between 5 and 15 years is 2,534 out of 10,000 of all ages. (Table II, p. 137. Between these ages, the proportion of married (or widowed) girls per 1,000 is 246 for all religions and 287 for Hindus, or under 30 percent. (Table I, p. 164). By far the largest proportion, in fact, the great majority of marriages take place when the girls are 15 years of age or above. It will thus be seen that child marriages, taking the country as a whole, or the Hindu community as a whole,

form but a fraction of all marriages, and that in the large majority of cases they are mere espousals and not marriages in the sense of being the commencement of conjugal relations between the parties.

It is in this sense that most Hindus understand marriage and it is in this sense that Rabindranath Tagore was thinking of it when he wrote his paper on "The Indian Ideal of Marriage" for Count Hermann Keyserling's *Book of Marriage*. Tagore, in the passage quoted by Miss Katherine Mayo, was not expressing his own view (which he does at the end of his paper), but explaining his theory of how child marriage originated in India. We quote the passage as it occurs in Keyserling's book. Says Tagore:

> **The desire, however, against which India's solution of the marriage problem declared war, is one of Nature's most powerful fighters; consequently, the question of how to overcome it was not an easy one. There is a particular age, *said India,** at which this attraction between the sexes reaches its height: so if marriage is to be regulated according to the social will, it must be finished with before such age: Hence the Indian Custom of early marriage."—(*Book of Marriage*, p. 112).**

* (Italics except where otherwise stated are ours.—ED., *I.S.R.*)

Miss Katherine Mayo omits the words italicised, thus making out that these were Tagore's own views, "Rabindranath Tagore," she writes, "explains child marriage as a flower of the sublimated spirit, a conquest over sexuality and materialism won by exalted intellect for the eugenic uplift of the race. His conclusion, however, logically implies the conviction, simply, that Indian women must be securely bound and delivered before their womanhood is upon them, if they are to be kept in hand. (Here follows the quotation). In other words, a woman must be married before she knows she is one."...(*Mother India*, pp. 50, 51.) These inferences are Miss Mayo's, not Tagore's.

"*These must have been the lines of argument*, in regard to married love, pursued in our country," Tagore continues. "For the purpose of marriage, spontaneous love is unreliable; its proper cultivation should yield the best results...*such was the conclusion*—and this cultivation should begin before marriage. Therefore, from their earliest years, the hus-

band as an idea is held up before our girls, in verse and story, through ceremonial and worship. When at length they get this husband, he is to them not a person but a principle, like loyalty, patriotism or such other abstractions which owe their immense strength to the fact that the best part of them is our own creation and therefore part of our inner being." --(*Keyserling*, pp. 112, 113.)

"Hard-headed Americans"—a description which Miss Mayo approvingly adopts for her own nationals—may not be able to follow the poet's abstractions. What he says here in abstract propositions was concretely put by another eminent Hindu in another part of the country who explained to an Englishman the difference between the Indian and English systems of marriage: "You marry those whom you love," he said, "we love those whom we marry." The hardest-headed American cannot fail to understand that.

Tagore sets forth his own ideal of marriage in five long pages at the end of his paper (*Keyserling*, pp. 117 *et seq.*) ."Let me," he

begins, "as an individual Indian, offer in conclusion my own personal contribution to the discussion of the marriage question generally." He holds that the marriage system all over the world—and not only in India—from the earliest ages till now is a barrier in the way of the true union of man and woman which is possible only when "society shall be able to offer a large field for the creative work of women's special faculty, without detracting the creative work in the home." This is clear enough even for the hardest-headed American to see that the Poet has his own ideal of marriage which is neither that of India nor that of America.

Not once but again and again Tagore, as we have seen, guards himself against being understood to identify himself with his hypothetical Indian's argument for child marriages. He does not stop there. He expressly criticises the Indian system as the prime cause of our stagnation. Tagore writes:

In our language we call the power of woman over man by the name of *shakti*. Deprived of *shakti* the creative process in society languishes, and man, losing

his vitality, becomes mechanical in his habits. In such a case, though he may still retain many a passive quality, all energy of activity forsakes him. The manner in which the relations between the sexes have been regulated in our country has left no room for the action of this *shakti*; for, as we have seen, our society, with immoveable stability as its objective, has been busy cultivating the passive qualities? ever in dread of individual forcefulness. Now that our country has awakened to outside influences, she finds herself powerless to resist alien aggression. She has even lost the faculty of recognising that *her weakness proceeds from within her own social system and is not the outcome of any outward accident.*—(*Keyserling* p. 116.)

If Miss Katherine Mayo was not a purblind propagandist but an honest enquirer, and if she had had the patience to read Tagore's essay, she would have seen that he is, in fact, pressing home the same conclusion as she does, though with a larger vision and, of course, from a loftier motive. Tagore, in fact, is a thorough-going feminist. He is perhaps intellectually nearer the American view of the relation of the sexes than most Europeans. And it is this illustrious Indian that Miss Katherine Mayo represents as an apologist for the most corrupt form of child marriages! If Miss Mayo was too much pressed for time to read the whole of Tagore's essay, she might

have asked any one in Calcutta what the age of marriage of girls is in Tagore's own family. The answer would have made her at least hesitate before she wrote of "the robes that these facts (about child-marriage) can wear when arrayed by a poet for foreign consideration." (*Mother India*, p. 50.) That she was determined to discredit the Poet is evident from the next page where she says: "Such matter as this, coming as it does from one of the most widely known of modern Indian writers, may serve to suggest that we of the 'material-minded West' shall be misled if we too quickly accept the Oriental's phrases as making literal pictures of the daily human life of which he seems to speak." Miss Mayo makes one or two appreciative references to that "advanced Indian" Raja Ram Mohan Roy. The Poet Tagore's father, was the Raja's immediate successor in the apostolic line of the Brahmo Samaj. The religious and social principles of the Samaj are nowhere more beautifully illustrated than in the illustrious house of Maharshi Devendranath Tagore.

Miss Katherine Mayo—quite needlessly—puts Mahatma Gandhi in the witness-box to support her case. "Mr. Gandhi has recorded," she writes. "that he lived with his wife, as such. when he was thirteen years old, and adds that if he had not, unlike his brother in similar case, left her presence for a certain period each day to go to school, he would either have fallen a prey to disease and premature death, or have led (thence-forth) a burdensome existence." It is forty-five years since Mahatmaji was thirteen years old, and none of *his* sons was married until they were much more than thirteen years of age. What has happened in Mahatmaji's family has happened in thousands of homes and his own personal experience has only a historical, not to say antiquarian, interest to educated Indians at the present day- This is not a mere personal opinion but borne out by Census statistics and testified to in Census reports from which we shall quote presently. Moreover, in dealing with Mahatmaji's confidences we should never forget that men who record

their 'confessions' after a long interval and for the benefit of humanity, are prone, as a rule, unconsciously to intensify the shades so as to convey their message more impressively to posterity. The classic 'Confession' of St. Augustine, Rousseau, and even of De Quincey on Opium-eating, abundantly bear out this caution. Every system has its unwritten conventions well-understood by those born and brought up in it. And the Hindu family system in its integrity was full of hedges and fences to keep the child-wife and boy-husband apart till they were of age, according to Indian ideas, to live together as man and wife. There are many men of Mahatmaji's age who can testify from personal experience to the effectiveness of these safe-guards.

Miss Mayo is merely impertinent when she says that Indians are afraid to face the ugly facts in their social life. The accusation will be moretrue of Eu ropeans and Americans who, oblivious of the beam in their own eyes, consider it their mission to point out the moat in the eyes of distant Asiatics. The Hindu

reform movement which has existed for nearly a hundred years has devoted its attention to the evils in Hindu Society. Child-marriage in particular has received a great deal of attention. The following passage is taken from the Census Report of 1901:

"Among the better classes a feeling is springing up against it (infant marriage)—partly because the parents dislike exposing their daughters to the risk of a long period of widowhood and partly because of the influence of Western ideas which makes them feel the impropriety of imposing upon immature girls the duties of a wife and mother. The two most recent Hindu sects which appeal to the educated classes—the Brahmo Samaj in Bengal and the Arya Samaj in Upper India—lay great stress on the desirability of allowing girls to reach maturity as virgins. The Social Conference which holds its meetings annually in connection with the National Congress has made the abolition of child-marriage one of the leading planks in its platform, and it is aided in its propaganda by the difficulties, already referred to, which many of the higher castes at present experience in finding husbands for their girls." (*Census of India*, 1901, p. 443).

The subsequent Census Reports show that there has been a steady though gradual rise in the age of marriage. In the Census Report for 1911, Mr. Gait points out that the high castes are usually far less prone to infant marriage than the low. (Page 268). He writes:—

"The practice has been denounced by many social reformers since Mr. Malabari opened the campaign

a quarter of a century ago; and the Social Conference which holds its meetings annually in connection with the National Congress has made the abolition of child marriage one of the leading planks in its platform. It is, as we have seen, strongly discouraged by the Brahmos in Bengal and the Aryas in Northern India. The more enlightened members of the higher castes, who do not allow widows to remarry, are beginning to realize how wrong it is to expose their daughters to the risk of lifelong widowhood, and a feeling against infant marriage is thus springing up amongst them," (*Census of India*, 1911, page 271).

Miss Mayo, we see, refers to the Census Report for 1921. But as usual she leaves out everything that does not suit her purpose. Commenting on the statistics, the Report says:-

Whatever be the causes to which the change may be attributed, the figures clearly show an increase in the numbers of those in the early age-categories who are still numbers of those in the early age-categories who are still unmarried. The movement is most marked in the Hindu community, but is shared by the other religions, the change being less noticeable among the Buddhist and Christian communities who are not addicted to early marriage. The change is most conspicuous in the age categories 10 to 15 for women and 10 to 20 for men. Some analysis of the regional and communal figures will be of interest. In Bengal and Bihar and Orissa the rise in the age of marriage is marked. The number of males left unmarried between the ages of 10 and 15 has risen from 826 in 1891 to 868 in 1921, the increase in the age-period 15 to 20 being from 594 to 665. The case of girls is still more striking, the figures being given in the marginal tables, and for both males and females the rise during the last

decade has been exceptionally high." **(*Census of India*, 1921, page 159).**

It is remarked that the Vaidyas and Brahmans, the two great Hindu literary and professional castes of Bengal, take the lead in postponing the age of marriage of both boys and girls. We shall have to say something on these figures in the next article. But we ask the reader to note two points: the larger prevalence of child marriage among the less advanced than among the educated middle classes; and the striking progress in Bengal, and especially among professional classes, which Miss Mayo has marked out of special censure.

V

The quotations which we made from Census Reports in the last issue clearly show that child-marriages are steadily becoming things of the past and that the progress is greatest among the higher and educated classes. The inference is plain. The spread of education and the improvement of economic conditions—

both of which will be the first and foremost task of a National Indian Government—will lead to the same result among all sections of the population. The very conservatism of the Hindu community will prove to be of great assistance in accelerating the reform. If its great mass makes it difficult to move, once started it gathers at every step momentum at an enormous rate and all thoughtful Indian reformers have, therefore, preferred the method of small beginnings to what are known as "knock-down" methods. If Miss Katherine Mayo had the least acquaintance with comparative studies in sociology, she would not have made the stupid mistake of representing child-marriage as an inevitable and ineradicable incident of Hindu society and Hindu religion. Child-marriage, as we have shown in previous articles, prevailed in ancient Greece and Rome, and in Stuart England when the Pilgrim Fathers sailed in search of religious freedom to the New World. "A very important cause of the decline of the marriage rate and the rise of the age for marriage in Europe,"

says Westermarck in his *History of Human Marriage,* "is the difficulty of supporting a family in modern society." The same difficulty is also operating in India at the present day with increasing severity. A modern writer, whom Westermarck quotes approvingly, points out that "by the general diffusion of education and culture, by the new inventions and discoveries of the age, by the increase of commerce and intercourse and wealth, the tastes of men and women have become widened, their desires multiplied, new gratifications and pleasures have been supplied to them. By this increase of the gratifications of existence the relative share of them which married life affords has become just so much less. The domestic circle does not fill so large a place in life as formerly. It is really less important to either man or woman. Married life has lost in some measure its advantage over a single life. There are so many pleasures, now, that they can be enjoyed as well or even better in celibacy."—(*The History of Human Marriage,* Vol. I, p. 393). Serious thinkers in the West

are much exercised in mind as to whether this result is altogether good for the community. But it is true that the wide prevalence of child and compulsory marriages is incompatible with a high standard of life and a rise in the standard of life is bound directly to lead to an improvement in the age and voluntary character of marriage. The slow rate at which the standard of life in India moves upward is due to economic causes for which the political system cannot be absolved, inspite of Miss Katherine Mayo's pragmatism, of a large measure of responsibility. We do not, however, wish to go into that large question at this point. What we are immediately concerned with is to repudiate with all the emphasis which we command Miss Katherine Mayo's attempt to make the prevalence of child marriages in India a justification for the perpetuation of White domination and to pour contempt on the national character and aspirations of the Indian people.

In quoting the passage from the Census Report of India for 1921 relating to the age of

marriage, we called special attention to the testimony to its noteworthy rise in Bengal and particularly among the Brahman and Vaidya castes, which are the two most literary castes in the province. We did this not only because most of Miss Katherine Mayo's hospital cases are derived from Bengal, but because she has chosen to pour a special measure of her venom upon that province and its people. She writes :—

> Bengal is the seat of bitterest political unrest—the producer of India's main crop of anarchists, bomb-throwers and assassins. Bengal is also among the most sexually exaggerated regions of India; and medical and police authorities in any country observe the link between that quality and 'queer' criminal minds—the exhaustion of normal avenues of excitement creating a thirst and a search in the abnormal for gratification. But Bengal is also the stronghold of strict *purdah*, and one cannot but speculate as to how many explosions of eccentric crime in which the young politicals of Bengal have indulged, were given the detonating touch by the unspeakable flatness of their *purdah* deadened home lives made the more irksome by their own half-digested dose of foreign doctrines.—(*Mother India*, p. 118.)

It is strange—is it not ?—that this (according to Miss Mayo) God-forsaken province should have produced during this last century the largest number of great Indians who have attained an international reputation. Raja

Ram Mohan Roy, Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, Sri Rama Krishna Paramahamsa, Keshub Chandra Sen, Swami Vivekananda in the sphere of religion ; Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Toru Dutt, Rabindranath Tagore, Sarojini Naidu in the region of poetry ; Sir Jagadis Chander Bose and Sir P. C. Ray in the realm of science ; Sir Surendranath Banerjee, Lord Sinha, and Chittaranjan Das in politics ; Sir Gurudas Banerjee and Sir Ashutosh Mukerjee in education. What a brilliant galaxy to spring out of the muck of Miss Katherine Mayo's "most sexually exaggerated province" ! Even New York and Chicago, we fancy, have not produced greater men in so many spheres and in comparatively so short a time !

Miss Katherine Mayo merely repeats, though she may not be conscious of it, the tittle-tattle of Anglo--India when she brackets together the political unrest in Bengal and what she calls the sexual exaggeration of that province. The Anglo-Saxon has many great qualities but he has one

peculiarly odious and, indeed, contemptible vice, and it is to impute to political and national rivals the most obscene forms of personal immorality. So long as a man or a nation does not cross his path, he will cheerfully condone and even join in their jovial exploits, but the moment that he thinks his interests are menaced, he will at once assume the attitude of a stern moralist towards the peccadilloes of his erstwhile comrades and boon companions. In pursuance of this racial weakness the Indian political extremist of the Partition days was described as a sexual pervert. Those who knew him laughed at this description, but very few outside Calcutta, or, at most, Bengal knew anything of him. We ourselves did not realise the full extent of this calumny until we had unimpeachable testimony to its utter falsity. The late Sir Narayan Chandavarkar with Mr. Justice Beachcroft was appointed by the Government of India to examine the cases of some scores of men, mostly students, who were held in confinement for alleged complicity in anarchist doings. The committee, we

think, personally interviewed some of them. Its proceedings were private, but this writer distinctly remembers Sir Narayan, when he returned from Calcutta, telling him that the talk about the degeneracy of these boys was pure bunkum. On the contrary, they had, he said in effect, made a religion of physical fitness. The Gita was their manual of conduct and devotion, and hard physical exercise was a regular part of their daily discipline. Miss Katherine Mayo need not have come all the way to India to verify the observation of medical and police authorities about "the exhaustion of normal avenues of excitement creating a thirst and a search in the abnormal for gratification." "Mother India," we fancy, had its origin in such a thirst leading to such a search. The muck is in Miss Katherine Mayo's mind more than in Bengal or any other part of India, though, of course, India like every other part of the world is compounded of mud and sky.

We have thus far dealt with Miss Katherine Mayo's dictum that the woes of India spring from the Indian's manner of getting into the

world. We have shown that this manner is not essentially different from that of other races and nations ; that child marriage with the safe-guards associated with it in all but a very small number of cases, has not been a cause of race degeneration ; that all over the country and more particulary in Bengal and among the "Babus" the age of marriage has been rapidly rising ; that Miss Katherine Mayo has, by omitting his reservations, misrepresented the Poet Tagore as having evolved in order to mislead Western leaders a sort of poetic philosophy in justification of child marriages. This habit of misrepresentation, indeed, seems to be a large part of Miss Katherine Mayo's literary equipment. The Rev. Popley in an article in the *Indian Witness*, the American Methodist weekly published in Lucknow, reports that Miss Bose, the Principal of Victoria College at Lahore, repudiates the statements attributed to her in Miss Katherine Mayo's book as having been made by her in a personal interview. Mahatma Gandhi likewise in the course of an article in *Young India* offers

a similar disavowal. Mahatmaji writes: "In her hurry to see everything Indian in a bad light, she has not only taken liberty with my writings, but she has not thought it necessary even to verify through me certain things ascribed by her or others to me. In fact she has combined in her person what we understand in India by the judicial and executive officer. She is both the prosecutor and the judge." Readers of Miss Katherine Mayo's book will have constantly to be on their guard against accepting without verification her statements. She is a witness who takes liberties with truth. In the next and following articles we shall deal with her allegations regarding the Indian's "sex-life," which are far more atrocious and far more flagrantly false than those about the Indian's manner of getting into the world.

VI

Miss Katherine Mayo makes a number of allegations as typical of the Indian's sex-life from the time of his getting into the world.

She begins with the Hindu religion. "Shiva, one of the greatest of the Hindu deities," she writes, "is represented, on high road shrines, or the little altar of the home, or in personal amulets, by the image of the male generative organ, in which shape he receives the daily sacrifices of the devout. The followers of Vishnu, multitudinous in the south, from their childhood wear painted upon their foreheads the sign of the function of generation. And although it is accepted that the ancient inventors of these and kindred emblems intended them as aids to the climbing of spiritual heights, practice and extremely detailed narrative of the intimacies of the gods, preserved in the hymns of the fireside, give them literal meaning and suggestive power, as well as religious sanction in the common mind." (p. 31) Miss Mayo cites Abbe Dubois as her authority for the meaning of the religious symbols and for the view that they operate as a constant reminder of the sexual function to the Hindu mind. The origin of religious symbols may interest antiquarians

but its value as evidence of the moral influence of a religion at a given time, is very small. We have before us a little book, *The Mystery of the Circle and the Cross** by Francis Swiney, in which the evolution of religious symbols is traced from their hieroglyphic beginnings. The Cross like the Linga, according to this writer, had a phallic origin. But no Christian to-day is reminded by the Cross of the male organ of fertilisation. Neither is the Hindu by the Linga. Miss Katherine Mayo, had she consulted any less biassed source, would have found that the Abbe's assumption has no basis in fact. A better equipped American traveller than Miss Mayo who spent the best part of a year (1913-14) in India and has written what is, perhaps, the best book on the Religious Faiths of India, Professor James Bisset Pratt, wrote of the Linga: "Phallic symbols are common the world over, and this one like the rest, probably originated as the emblem of some primitive god of procreation. At any rate, Shiva and his lingam has for nearly

*The Open Road Publishing Company, London 1908.

all his worshippers quite lost all sexual significance and is simply the object in which Mahadeva, the great God, chooses to incarnate himself for purposes of worship." (*India and its Faiths*: Houghton, Mifflin Co., p. 17). Monier Williams whose book is "an account of the religions of the Indian peoples, based on a life's study of their literature and on personal investigation in their own country," says of the Linga that it is, "never in the mind of a Saiva connected with indecent ideas nor with sexual love." (*Religious Thought and Life in India*. Footnote to p. 68.)

Hindu exponents of Saivism deny the phallic origin of the linga. Swami Vivekananda, whom Miss Katherine Mayo contemptuously dismisses as "a modern teacher of the spiritual sense of the Phallic cult," attributed the phallic interpretation to the inveterate tendency of the Westerner to look at things from the physical and objective side. That great authority on Indian Art, Dr. Ananda Coomaraswami, approaching the question from a different point of view, has also repudiated the phallic theory

of the origin of the Linga. Whatever may be the truth regarding its origin, there can be no more conclusive proof of the absence of any phallicism in the conception of the Linga for long centuries than that the Siva cult, of which the *linga* is still the great symbol, has on the admission of Christian missionary writers, produced a devotional literature unsurpassed for its fervour of faith. "No cult in the world," says Dr. Barnett, "has produced a richer devotional literature or one more instinct with brilliance of imagination, fervour of feeling, and grace of expression." (*Heart of India*, p. 80, quoted by Dr. Macnicol in his "Indian Theism.") Of Manikka-Vasagar, the great poet-saint of Saivism, Dr. Macnicol himself writes: "Throughout his poems there is such an accent of humility and adoration, such a sense of his unworthiness and of the divine grace, as seems to bring him very near indeed to the spirit of the Christian Saints. Again and again we find Manikka-Vasagar giving utterance to such experiences as are common to all devout souls who have sought God sincerely

and have in some measure found Him." (*Indian Theism*, p, 173). "From his Manikka-Vasagar's time," writes Dr. G. U. Pope, the great Tamil scholar, "dates the foundation of that vast multitude of Saiva shrines which constitute a peculiar feature of the Tamil country." It would be strange indeed if such rare devotion had centred round a phallic symbol !

Miss Katherine Mayo's interpretation of the Vaishnava caste-mark is also based upon Abbe Dubois. But the meaning which the Abbe read into the *namam* is his own invention. Prof. H. H. Wilson, an admitted authority on the subject, in his book, "Religious Sects of the Hindus," says that this mark is "supposed to represent the sankhu, shell, the discus, the club and the lotus, which Vishnu bears in his four hands." (The Rev. H. A. Popley in the *Indian Witness* of Sept. 7.) Monier Williams in his "Religious Thought and Life in India," says that the Vaishnava mark denotes the impress of the God Vishnu's feet. (p. 400.) "This mark is said to represent the foot of Vishnu," observes the Rev. J, E. Padfield in his very

detailed study of *The Hindu at Home*. (Madras S.P.C.K. Depository, 1908). "The central mark is in honour of Lakshmi, the wife of Vishnu, and is called *Srichurnam*, the whole forming a trident," (p. 75, Second Edition). Mr. Padfield was C. M. S. Missionary at Masulipatam, and his work, he says in the Preface, "represents the results of personal observations during a period of twenty-seven years spent in South India, when I was in daily intercourse with the people of the land." Mr. Padfield concludes his chapter on "The Hindu Sacred Marks" with the remark that "these various details remind us of the Christian mark, the mark of the Cross made upon the forehead at Baptism, or of that seal mentioned in the book of Revelation where the angel "Sealed the servants of our God in the forehead." (p. 81).

Though Miss Katherine Mayo started by declaring that she would leave untouched the realms of religion, her strongest attack is directed against the religion of the Hindus and

her almost sole authority in this campaign is the Abbe Dubois. Here is another instance :

> In case however, of the continued failure of the wife —any wife—to give him a child, the Hindu husband has a last recourse; he may send his wife on a pilgrimage to a temple, bearing gifts. And, it is affirmed, some castes habitually save time by doing this on the first night after the marriage. At the temple, by day, the woman must beseech the God for a son, and at night she must sleep within the sacred precincts. Morning come, she has a tale to tell the priest of what befell her under the darkness.
>
> 'Give praise, O daughter of honour,' he replies, 'It was the God.'
>
> And so she returns to her home. If a child comes, and it lives, a year later she revisits the temple, carrying, with other gifts, the hair from her child's head." (*Mother India*, p. 37.)

The authority for this story is again Abbe Dubois, but it might have been Boccacio who inspired the Abbe with the idea. "Friar Alberto makes a woman believe that the Archangel Gabriel is in love with her and visits her several times at night under that pretence." The smug immoralities of the monastic orders of the Church of which the Abbe Dubois was such a shining light, is a frequent theme not only of the great Italian, but of several subsequent writers. Abbe Dubois did not come to this country because he felt a call to do so.

According to his own statement, he fled from the horrors of the French Revolution. "Had I remained," he writes, "I should in all probability have fallen a victim, as did so many of my friends who held the same religious and political opinions as myself." The corruption and licentiousness of the clergy was one of the causes of the French Revolution which made a clean sweep of the Christian Deity and installed the Goddess of Reason instead. Many of Abbe Dubois' "observations" on Hindu religion are merely his reading into it of the things he had known of the religious in his own country. The story of childless wives going to temples to be visited at night by God in the person of a priest, is distinctly a reminiscence from the Abbe's Seminary days. The Abbe's life in India was in keeping with his training. He was an impostor from first to last and that of deliberate purpose. "I had no sooner arrived amongst the natives of India," he writes, "than I recognised the absolute necessity of gaining their confidence. Accordingly I made it my constant

rule to live as they did. I adopted their style of clothing, and I studied their customs and methods of life in order to be exactly like them. I even went so far as to avoid any display of repugnance to the majority of their peculiar prejudices. By such circumspect conduct I was able to ensure a free and hearty welcome from people of all castes and conditions, and was often favoured of their own accord with the most curious and interesting particulars about themselves." Notwithstanding all this camouflage, the Abbe's work as a Christian Missionary was, on his own admission, a humiliating failure. "The restraints and privations under which I have lived," he wrote, "by conforming myself to the usages of the country; embracing, in many respects, the prejudices of the natives; living like them, and becoming all but a Hindu myself; in short, by being made all things to all men that I might by all means save some—all these have proved of no avail to make me proselytes. During the long period I have lived in India, in the capacity of a missionary, I have made, with the

assistance of a native missionary, in all between two and three hundred converts of both sexes. Of this number two thirds were Pariahs or beggars; and the rest were composed of Sudras, vagrants, outcastes of several tribes, who being without resources, turned Christian in order to form connexions, chiefly for the purpose of marriage, or with some other interested views." (Editor's Introduction to Third Edition, pp, xxvi, xxvii.) The Abbe, foiled in his missionary work, thought of serving Christianity in another way. He writes:

"There is one motive which above all others has influenced my determination (to write the book). It struck me that a faithful picture of the wickedness and incongruities of polytheism and idolatry would by its very ugliness help greatly to set off the beauties and perfections of Christianity. It was thus that the Lacedæmonians placed drunken slaves in the sight of their children in order to inspire the latter with a horror of intemperance." (Author's Preface, p. 9)

It is astonishing that in spite of this candid avowal of the Abbe that his main object in writing his book was to set off the excellences of Christianity against the wickedness of Hinduism, it should be accepted as a reliable account of Hindu manners and customs. The period during which the Abbe lived in India was also the period of greatest rivalry between the British and the French. The fact that the Abbe retired with a pension from the British East India Company "in recognition of many services he had rendered in India," may be regarded either as a testimony to the disinterested generosity of the East India Company or to the judicious patriotism of the Abbe himself.

The Abbe's book is on the same plane of reliability as Miss Katherine Mayo's. Both bring a strong preconceived bias to their task. The Abbe was a fanatic and futile propagandist for Christianity; Miss Mayo is the equally fanatic apostle (professer) of White domination. In fact, believers in reincarnation may think that the sanctimonious Abbe of a century

ago has been reborn as the American Sanitary missionary of our time.

Some critics of Miss Mayo's book give her credit for being a trained observer. No trained observer will accept, without verification from other sources, statements of a gross character contained in a book avowedly intended to damn one religion for the glorification of another, as Miss Mayo has done not once but repeatedly.

VII

We devoted a large part of our article last week and we have to do so this week also, to show that Abbe Dubois is an inveterately prejudiced and utterly untrustworthy chronicler of Hindu customs and manners. This we are obliged to do because, for most of the worst libels on Hindu social and religious practices in Miss Katherine Mayo's book, the Abbe is almost the only authority. We quoted last week from the Abbe's own Preface the avowal of his motive for writing the book. The passage will bear repetition. He says: "There

is one motive which above all others has influenced my determination. It struck me that a faithful picture of the wickedness and incongruities of polytheism and idolatry would by its very ugliness help greatly to set off the beauties and perfections of Christianity. It was thus that the Lacedæmonians placed drunken slaves in the sight of their children in order to inspire the latter with a horror of intemperance."

Suppose a Hindu were to spend some years in the United States with a like motive to produce a faithful picture of the wickedness and incongruities of Mammon-worship so that by its very ugliness it may help greatly to set off the beauties and perfections of the Vedanta, no serious student of American culture and civilisation would think of relying on him as an authority on the subject. The Abbe's book is the last source to which any foreigner, after reading this candid avowal, should look for a true and faithful account of Hindu manners and customs. Mahatma Gandhi has likened the author of "Mother India" to a drain inspector;

the Abbe Dubois was a veritable scavenger of social filth.

We showed last week, how the Abbe's statements regarding the significance to Hindus of the sacred symbols of Hinduism are contradicted by Hindu authorities and by Europeans like H. H. Wilson, Monier Williams and J. E. Padfield, who spent the greater part of their life in India.

We shall now cite the views of an eminent Englishman who was in India about the same period and whose labours covered nearly the same part of the country as the Abbe Dubois'. Sir Thomas Munro arrived in India as a boy of 19 years in 1780 and rose to be Governor of Madras and died of cholera, while about to lay down that office, at Gooty in 1827. Though he began life as a military officer, his greatest work was done in the capacity of a civil and revenue administrator. He spoke the vernaculars fluently. His manner of life may be judged from the following passage relating to his early days in India from Arbuthnot's Memoir prefixed to "Selections from his

(Munro's) Minutes and other official writings." "Munro says in one of his letters written after he had been nine years in the country, that he had 'never experienced hunger or thirst, fatigue or poverty' until he came to India; but that since then he had frequently met with the first three, and the last had been his constant companion. He was three years in India before he was 'master of any other pillow than a book or cartridge-pouch; his bed was a piece of canvass stuck on four cross sticks', and the greater part of his journeys he had to make on foot; the only horse he possessed being so old that he was always obliged to walk two-thirds of the way." (p. xxxiii, Kegan Paul, London).

Official position in India in those days was very different from what it is to-day. Munro lived among the people, but as their friend and protector. The people loved him. A striking proof of their affection is given by Wilkes in his "Sketches of the South of India." "I will not deny myself," he writes, "the pleasure of stating an incident related to me by a respectable public servant of the Government of Mysore,

who was sent in 1807 to assist in the adjustment of a disputed boundary between that territory and the district in charge of the Collector. A violent dispute occurred in his presence between some villagers, and the party aggrieved threatened to go to Anantapur and complain to their *father*. He perceived that Colonel Munro was meant, and found upon inquiry that he was generally distinguished throughout the district by that appellation." (*Arbuthnot's Memoir*, p. cxix, cxx.)

Sir Thomas Munro was what we should now call an Indian Nationalist. He constantly protested against the supersession of Indians by Europeans in responsible offices, against increasing the number of European officers in the Indian Army, against the unrestricted influx of Europeans into the country, and strongly favoured the retention and development of the ancient village community as the basis and foundation of the British Indian administration. Sir Valentine Chirol contrasts Munro's Indian policy with that of Lord Curzon. "To him (Curzon) England's mission in

India was not as it had been for Sir Thomas Munro, eighty years earlier, to train the Indians to govern and to protect themselves. Lord Curzon preferred to govern her himself." (*India* p. 115.)

This digression is necessary because it may be generally thought that, as Munro was an official, he would have had less opportunities of coming in close contact with the people than a missionary like Abbe Dubois. That may be so in these days but in the beginning of the last century things were far otherwise. While the Abbe's information was mostly gathered from the two or three hundred of the riff-raff of the population which he had gathered into his fold, Munro's intercourse extended to all classes, the official and literate class, the merchants and traders, and most of all, the peasantry. His estimate of the Hindu character and manners is therefore entitled to far greater weight than that of the Abbe. In fact, the Abbe's book seems to have carried very little weight with contemporary British statesmen. The first translation was published by

the East India Company in 1817 and in 1833 all offices were thrown open to natives of India without distinction of caste or creed. In the debates in Parliament, which were on a high level, no speaker seems to have referred to the Abbe's book even casually though other writers were profusely cited. The Marquess of Lansdowne the great Whig leader and Minister, speaking in the House of Lords said that he would select only two from among the crowd of witnesses as well calculated to form a correct judgment on Hindu character, Sir Thomas Munro and Bishop Heber.

To the Abbe Dubois, and even more to Miss Katherine Mayo, the Hindus are a nation of imbeciles, incapable of and unfit for self-government, who ought to be perpetually kept under European domination. That was not the opinion of Sir Thomas Munro and of Bishop Heber. Sir Thomas Munro, speaking of the Hindus, declared that there was no reason to believe that the Hindus were inferior to the Europeans in natural talent. The Bishop said of them that " they were constitu-

tionally kind-hearted, industrious, sober and peaceable; at the same time that they show themselves, on proper occasions, a manly and courageous people."

Sir Thomas Munro, before a Select Committee of the Commons, gave his estimate of Hindu civilization in the following terms:

"I do not exactly understand what is meant by the civilization of the Hindus. In the higher branches of science, in the knowledge of the theory and practice of good government, and in an education which by banning prejudice and superstition, opens the mind to receive instruction of every kind from every quarter, they are much inferior to Europeans. But if a good system of agriculture, unrivalled manufacturing skill, capacity to produce whatever can contribute to either convenience or luxury, schools established in every village for teaching reading, writing and arithmetic, the general practice of hospitality and charity amongst each other, and, above all, a treatment, of the female sex, full of confidence, respect and delicacy are among the signs which denote a civilised people—then the Hindus are not inferior to the nations of Europe and if civilization is to become an article of trade between the two countries, I am convinced that this country (England) will gain by the import cargo."

Sir Thomas Munro was specially anxious that there should be no misunderstanding about Hindu women. He said:

In a former part of my evidence, in speaking of Hindu women, I mentioned the custom of their bathing in public at European stations: this statement may perhaps leave an unfavourable impression of their demeanour, but there is no man who has been

in India but must maintain that nothing can be more modest than their behaviour, that they confide in it on all occasions for their protection from insult, and are seldom deceived. It would be no slight praise to the women of any nation, not even to the ladies of England, to have it said that the correctness of their conduct was not inferior to that of the Brahmin women and the Hindu women of the higher classes.

Even such a hostile witness as the Abbe Dubois is obliged to admit that Hindu women were treated with the greatest consideration at least in public. In the first translation of his work published in 1817 by the East India Company occurred the following passage :

But, degraded as the Hindu women are in private life, it must be admitted that they receive the highest respect in public. They certainly do not pay them those flat and frivolous compliments which are used amongst us, and which are the disgrace of both sexes; but on the other hand, they have no insults to dread. A woman may go wheresoever she pleases; she may walk in the most public places (must I except those where the Europeans abound ?) and have nothing to fear from liberties numerous as they are in the country. A man who should stop to gaze on a woman in the street or elsewhere, would be universally hooted as an insolent and a most low-bred fellow." (p. 200, 1817 edition.)

In the revised version from which the late Mr. Beauchamp made the present translation in 1897, and from the third edition of which Miss Mayo makes her citations, the uncomplimentary reflections on comtemporary European

manners are carefully omitted. The passage is recast as under :

> But if women enjoy very little consideration in private life, they are in some degree compensated by the respect which is paid to them in public. They do not, it is true, receive those insipid compliments which we have agreed to consider polite; but then, on the other hand, they are safe from the risk of insult. A Hindu woman can go anywhere alone, even in the most crowded places, and she need never fear the impertinent looks and jokes of idle loungers. This appears to me to be really remarkable in a country where the moral depravity of inhabitants is carried to such lengths. A house inhabited solely by women is a sanctuary which the most shameless libertine would not dream of violating. (pp. 339-340.)

A Japanese artist who has spent the greater part of his life in England wrote some years ago a book on English manners and customs. Contrasting the English and Japanese treatment of women, he said : "We kiss them in private and kick them in public ; you kiss them in public and kick them in private." The Abbe Dubois seems likewise to suggest, that the deference paid to Hindu women in public was not the result of a real respect for them.

The deliberate disingenuousness of Miss Katherine Mayo is clear from the fact that in all her several references to the Abbe Dubois' book, she not once tells the reader that the

manuscript of the book was submitted to the East India Company in 1807, and that the account in it relates to a period separated from our time by a century and a quarter. In one place at least she implies that the account relates to a period not very remote from ours. We refer to her statement that the Abbe found "this ancient law (relating to the behaviour of a wife towards her husband) *still the code of nineteenth century Hinduism,*" (p. 74), while the greater part of the Abbe's Indian career belongs to the eighteenth century. It may be nothing to Miss Katherine Mayo to skip over a century in order to achieve her purpose of blackening the Hindus in the eyes of the world, but one might ask what the position of women and social conditions were generally in Europe or even in Miss Mayo's own country a hundred years ago. But comparisons are odious.

VIII

We may quote one more passage from the Abbe's book to show how women's honour

was greatly respected in India even in what in the West would be regarded as trying circumstances. The Abbe writes :

> I have often spent the night in one of the common rest-houses where the men and women lodging there lying all huddled together anyhow, and almost side by side; but have never known or heard of anyone disturbing the tranquillity of the night by indecent act or word. Should any person be so ill-advised as to attempt anything of the sort, the whole room would be up in arms against him in a moment. and prompt chastisement would follow the offence. (p. 340).

We wonder whether the Abbe could have said such a thing of Chicago or New York.

If the Abbe Dubois was an impartial observer and not an atrabilious fanatic, he would have realised that the respect paid to women in public by Hindus was inconsistent with the degraded position which, according to him, was normally assigned to them in private. There can be no question that the Hindus of his time were posing before the Abbe. He himself repeatedly says in his book that the Hindus of his time had a great contempt for Europeans and it is, therefore, improbable that they would have gone out of their way to pretend a respect for women.

which they did not feel in order to win the praise of the Abbe. Not only were Europeans held in contempt but Christianity itself was, on their account, brought into contempt. Writing of the disrepute into which Christianity had fallen among Hindus in his time, he attributes it to the conquest of the country by Europeans, " a disastrous event as far as the advance of Christianity was concerned." He writes: "Having witnessed the immoral and disorderly conduct of the Europeans who then over-ran the whole country, the Hindus would hear no more of a religion which appeared to have so little influence over the behaviour of those professing it and who had been brought up in its tenets; and their prejudice against Christianity has gone on increasing steadily day by day, as the people became more familiar with Europeans, until it finally received its death-blow. For it is certainly a fact that for the last sixty years very few converts have been made in India." The Abbe adds that "a respectable Hindu who was asked to embrace the Christian religion would look

upon the suggestion either as a joke or else as an insult of the deepest dye." (p. 301). The Abbe's estimate of the Europeans of his time is more emphatically expressed in the original (1817) edition than in the revised one.

Miss Mayo, we see. professes to have written the book out of the fullness of her love for Hindu women and children. The many protests that have been made against her book by individual Indian women and associations of them are the best comment upon her profession. As a matter of fact she has attacked Hindu women even more foully than Hindu men. We cannot think of a more venomous attack than the following:

> This also, is a matter neither of rank nor of special ignorance. In fact, so far are they from seeing good and evil, as we see good and evil, that the mother, high caste or low caste, will practise upon her children—the girl to make her sleep well, the boy to make him manly, an abuse which the [illegible] least, is apt to continue daily for the rest of his life. The last point should be noted. Hig[illegible] authority in widely scattered sectio[illegible] that practically every child brought under observation, for whatever reason, bears on its body the signs of this habit. (pp. 32, 33).

Miss Katherine Mayo is not able to quote any specific authority for this monstrous and

degrading accusation against the mothers of India. Even her favourite Abbe Dubois has not said anything like it, though it is hardly likely that he would have omitted to refer to it if he had the slightest ground for believing in the existence of such a practice in his wholesale indictment of the Hindu race and religion. Miss Mayo speaks of "highest medical authority" attesting to this universal abuse of their infants by their Hindu mothers. She does not cite a single report or other official or non-official publication by a medical authority in support of her claim. One medical authority at least, and that a very high one, has totally repudiated Miss Mayo's allegation. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi, the well-known social worker and Vice-President of the Madras Legislative Council, speaking from her extensive experience as a medical practitioner, has stated that she has never come across any case which supported Miss Mayo's extraordinary statement. Any one who knows the high honour in which motherhood and mothers are held in India will have no hesitation in describing Miss Mayo's

statement as a frigid, calculated lie. India may forgive Miss Mayo many things, but this cowardly assault on the honour of her mothers, never. This single statement alone brands Miss Katherine Mayo as—but it is needless to say more.

As for the habit continuing in the case of boys into mature life, it is well-known that this is not one of the vices which at any time was said to be common among the Hindu people. The universality of marriage and early marriages in India remove the main cause which has led to the extensive prevalence of this vice in modern countries. (There are some illuminating pages on this and cognate subjects in Havelock Ellis's "The Task of Social Hygiene" a new edition of which was recently issued by the Oxford University Press.) According to another foul and fantastic statement of Miss Mayo's, which she puts in the mouth of 'a woman physician of wide present-day Indian experience', Indian girl-wives 'experience marital use two and three times a day.' The Indian husband must, indeed, be a

monster of sexuality to combine this with the continuance into adult life of the practice in which, according to Miss Mayo, he had been initiated in infancy by his mother! We are ashamed to write all this. but when a shameless woman, herself too obviously suffering from the sex-complex, proclaims to the world that these things are normal to Indian life, we have perforce to do so. An American friend writing last week says that the book is a revelation more of Miss Mayo than of Mother India! That Miss Katherine Mayo is only too apt gratuitously to invoke unnamed medical authority when she is unable to find any more specific basis for her highly fanciful and prurient imaginations, is conclusively proved by the striking letter which Dr. (Miss) M. I. Balfour, M. B., wrote to the *Times of India* on Monday the 10th. Dr. Balfour, we may mention, has been making a special investigation of maternity and infant-life in India for the last two years, and her observations, therefore, are of special importance. Medical authority in Miss Mayo's pages is as frequent and as elusive

as ancient texts in the mouth of the old-world pandit.

Cognate to this subject is another utterly unfounded statement about the dedication of boys in Hindu temples. We quote:

> In many parts of the country, north and south, the little boy, his mind so prepared, is likely, if physically attractive, to be drafted for the satisfaction of grown men, or to be regularly attached to a temple, in the capacity of a prostitute. Neither parent as a rule sees any harm in this but is rather flattered that the son has been found pleasing. (p. 32)

Absolutely no authority is given for this, not even the inevitable Abbe Dubois who devotes a special chapter of many pages to temple-worship. He refers to the dedication of girls, but there is no mention whatever of the dedication of young boys and their abuse by grown men. This, indeed, is an unheard of enormity which Miss Mayo fastens upon the Hindus. It is very difficult to prove a negative; but, as it happens in this case, we are able to cite a high scientific authority in repudiation of Miss Mayo's monstrous falsehood. The well-known writer on sexual science, Dr. Havelock Ellis, has suggested that there is a certain connection between the prevalence of homo-sexuality and

of infanticide. Prof. Westermarck questions this statement specifically on the ground that the connection does not exist among Hindus. He writes: On the other hand, we are acquainted with various facts that are quite at variance with Dr. Ellis's suggestion. Among many Hindu castes female infanticide has for ages been a genuine custom and yet pederasty is remarkably rare among the Hindu." (*Origin and development of Moral Ideas.* Vol. II- p. 485.) In another place he mentions, on the authority of Burton, that among the Hindus the practice is said to be held in abhorrence. Miss Katherine Mayo has here also allowed her imagination to run away with her.

As for the institution of deva-dasis, originally corresponding to vestal virgins, but now mostly given to prostitution, this journal took a prominent share in the starting of the anti-nautch movement and has always pleaded for its abolition. But against Miss Katherine Mayo's highly coloured picture of it, it is only fair to set the Abbe Dubois' comparison of it with prostitution in Europe in his days. After

a detailed description of the deva-dasis, the Abbe writes: "Nevertheless, to the discredit of Europeans it must be confessed that the quiet seductions which Hindu prostitutes know how to exercise with so much skill resemble, in no way the disgraceful methods of the wretched beings who give themselves up to a similar profession in Europe, and whose indecent behaviour, cynical impudence, obscene and filthy words of invitation are enough to make any sensible man who is not utterly depraved shrink from them in horror. Of all the women in India it is the courtesans, and especially those attached to the temples, who are most decently clothed. Indeed they are particularly careful not to expose any part of the body." (p. 587.) What would the Abbe have thought of the dress of fashionable European and American women in these days! Prostitution prevails, perhaps, to a greater extent in Europe and America than in India and the East generally. The peculiarity of deva-dasis, is that they have a place in the framework of temple-worship.

This should not be, and efforts are being made to abolish the institution. But has the Church no responsibility for evils which it does not officially recognise as part of itself? Christianity, like the ancient Pharisee, may thank God that it has no deva-dasis attached to itself as in Hindu temples, but it is only by voluntarily forfeiting its claim to dominate life in all its aspects can it escape responsibility for the commercialised or clandestine vice which is so notorious a feature of modern society.

Miss Katherine Mayo gives the following account of what she heard from a British woman doctor " a thousand miles east of Bombay." " My patients here," the lady doctor is reported to have said, " are largely the wives of University students. Practically every one is venereally infected." (p, 59.) There are other statements in the book to the effect that venereal disease is nearly universal in India. We must content ourselves here with stating a few facts. The late Sir Narayan Chandavarkar once gave a very effective reply to the charge of venereal infection among

Indians. The disease, he pointed out, is known in this country as the *Feringhi* disease, that is, a disease introduced by Europeans. A *Unani* hakim of note in Bombay told us the other day that this is the name by which the disease is referred to in *Unani* medical works. The disease was, and is still, rare in the interior of the country where there is very little intercourse with Europeans. Dr. Norman Leys in his book, *Kenya*, says that the disease was unknown in the old world until the discovery of the new. Many of the caste rules and restrictions were sanitary in their origin and Manu like Moses interwove a great deal of sanitation as he knew it into his religious and social precepts. The twin race poisons, namely, alcohol and syphilis, if not actually introduced into India by Europeans, have been greatly extended owing to their influence. It is a diabolical lie that University men in India are syphilitics as a class, and that their wives are infected by them with the disease.

IX

Miss Katherine Mayo, if she was the trained social observer which some of her admirers say she is, cannot have failed to see that the Abbe Dubois' statements about the public and private position of Indian women are contradictory and conflicting. She has not, as we pointed out in a previous article, made the slightest attempt to check them by reference to other contemporary estimates of Hindu civilization and manners. This is not all. No "trained social observer" would think of estimating the social progress of India without studying the writings of Ranade, the illustrious social and religious reform leader. As well might a student of Evolution ignore Darwin's "Origin of Species" or of Economics, Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations." Ranade is the great fountain-head of ideas of national progress, as Raja Ram Mohan Roy was before him. Ranade was not only a great thinker but he was also a great reader of contemporary literature having any bearing on

Indian national problems. Mr. Beauchamp's translation of Abbe Dubois' book did not escape his eagle eye. He made it the text of his address to the Twelfth National Social Conference held in Madras in 1898, the very next year of its publication. The way in which he utilised the book was characteristic of the man. He took the Abbe's statements at their face value, notwithstanding his opinion that being a missionary "he unconsciously exaggerated many points and misunderstood many others," and that he was "misinformed in many respects", that his explanations in some cases "were obviously untrue," and that the Abbe "was unjust to the old civilization." Ranade passed all this by and fastened upon what he called the Abbe's "curse" upon the people of India. The passage he referred to occurs on page 90 of Abbe Dubois' book and runs as follows :

It is a vain hope to suppose that the English people can ever improve the condition of the Hindus. The efforts of a humane and just government may succeed up to a certain point, but as long as the Hindus cling to their civil and religious institutions, customs and habits they must remain what they have always been, grovelling in poverty and wretchedness. These institutions

and customs are insurmountable obstacles in their path of progress. To make a new race of Hindus, you must begin by undermining the foundations of their civilisation, religion and polity and turn them into atheists and barbarians, and then give them new laws, new religion and new polity But even then the task will be half-accomplished, for, we should still have to give them a new nature and different inclinations. Otherwise, they would soon lapse into their former state and worth.

Ranade compared the Abbe's prophecy of despair to those of the Hindu astrologers who fixed the fatal limit of 5,000 years from the commencement of the Kaliyuga, and "accordin to whom we are now just on the verge of crossing this Rubicon which separates law from anarchy and virtue from impiety, and nothing that men can do in the work of their own salvation will ever help to avert the crisis." Ranade showed, comparing the state of things as described by the Abbe with what it was in 1898 when he delivered the address, that both the astrologer and the Abbe were at fault and remarked that "if he (the Abbe) had lived a hundred years later, he would have joined with the contemporary men of his calling in conferring on us his blessings instead of his curses." Ranade went on to say :

Have the past hundred years worked no permanent change for the better? I hope to be able to show that, if things are not all as bright as we wish them to be, they are not so dreary and cheerless as some would have them to be, and that the British connection and its just and humane administration have brought about a change in our religion, law and polity, of such a character as not to make it necessary that we should be all turned into atheists and barbarians, to be white-washed again into civilization and manners, and that, if we have not acquired a new nature, we have at least acquired inclinations and aspirations which will prevent our lapse into our former condition. (*Miscellaneous Writings of the late Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade*—p. 200).

The Abbe Dubois declared that Hindus cannot be redeemed without being saved from Hinduism. Miss Katherine Mayo says that their degradation rests upon a physical base—namely, "his (the Hindu's) manner of getting into the world and his sex-life thenceforward." Ranade in his address showed that the corruptions which attracted the attention of the Abbe were due to causes alien to the principles of Hindu civilization. These influences operated chiefly when the country was exposed to foreign invasions and Ranade ascribed "the tone of despondency and panic in the *Puranas* written about this time" to the alarm felt by the play of these alien influences. These

influences, Ranade held, "were not able to extinguish the old fire completely, and the spirit of righteous self-assertion and of faith in God which has distinguished Brahmanism from the first only wanted an opportunity to regain its old liberty." He continued:

"The opportunity so sorely needed has come to this country and slowly but surely priest-ridden and caste-ridden India is loosening its coils of ages. Abbe Dubois was unjust to the old civilization when he thought that we should have to unlearn all our past and commence with atheism and barbarism and then take our religion, law and polity from our foreign masters. Even if the task were possible, the remedy would be worse than the disease. We have not to unlearn our entire past—certainly not—the past which is the glory and wonder of the human race. We have to retrace our steps from the period of depression, when in panic and weakness a compromise was made with the brute force of ignorance and superstition. If this unholy alliance is set aside we have the Brahmanism of the first three Yugas unfolding itself in all its power and purity as it flourished in the best period of our history. Our nature has not to be changed, If that were necessary, escape would be hopeless indeed. Our inclinations and aspirations have to be shifted from one quarter to its opposite, from the more immediate past of our degradation to the most remote past of our glory. We need no foreign masters for this purpose. It is enough if they keep the peace and enforce toleration to all who work for righteousness. Super-imposed laws will not do service to us unless as in some extreme cases the Surgeon has to be sent for to stop hemorrhage and allow the Physician time to heal the patient. This work of liberation must be the work of our own hands each one working of himself for his own release. It

is in this spirit that the work has been carried on during the last thirty years and more." (*The Miscellaneous Writings of the late Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade.*– pp. 207, 208.)

In these weighty words Ranade not only replied to Abbe Dubois' book, but laid down the policy and the principle of Indian reform. Indian reformers are fully alive to the many social evils which retard the growth of Indian men and women to the full height of their stature, but they know that these evils are not inherent either in the physical or spiritual foundations of Hindu life and they have been working not without result to remove them without destroying the foundations of national life. This is necessarily a work of time. In this great work. they welcome the advice and assistance of friendly foreigners and have always done so. But writers like Miss Katherine Mayo and the Abbe Dubois who are inspired by a preconceived hatred of the Hindu religion and race are not of this class. Their writings are really a great hindrance to progress.

The Hindu religion interprets all sin in terms of ignorance. Knowledge—not mere intellectual knowledge—but that which shines out of

one's innermost being in the shape of conduct, is the true remedy. Such knowledge comes only through religion by Divine Grace. Hence no one is denied access to religion as it is the sole means of regeneration. "Even the worst sinner," says the Gita, "if he takes refuge in Me becomes quickly purified." Jesus Christ, as we understand Him, held the same view. And so did Gautama Buddha. We are becoming increasingly sceptical of modern institutional methods of dealing with evil, which leave the affections, the central core of our being, almost wholly out of account. It is not the Indian way; it was not Jesus' way. India must go about her reforms in her own way in keeping with the historic continuity of her culture and civilisation. She will not be bullied into it by the calumnies of a Miss Katherine Mayo. Setting ourselves right in the good opinion of Europe and America is not a matter of as much moment as the asserting and maintaining our right to deal with our national problems in our own way and in our own time. France does not

change her manners to suit American or British opinion, neither does America change hers because Europe makes Gargantuan fun of them. We feel it rather a humiliation to be asked to carry out this or that reform because otherwise we may suffer in the estimation of South African Whites or Americans, or Australians. Are there no dark spots in the national life of these people? Is there no injustice, no inequality, no vice, no oppression anywhere in the world except in India? Let him who is sinless cast the first stone. As for the British refusing future Constitutional Reform in India because of our social evils, English statesmen are too shrewd to mistake social maladjustment for political incapacity. Even if they do we should not mind it. We cannot sell our birthright of reconstructing our society according to our own ideal for the mess of political pottage which is the utmost that we may expect from a foreign Government. We cannot on any account allow the social initiative to pass out of our hands into those even of the most friendly outsiders.

A very kind and sympathetic Christian friend in expressing his appreciation of the *Indian Social Reformer* gently warns us against committing ourselves in condemning Miss Mayo's misrepresentations to any thing that may be subsequently used by opponents of social reform. Of this we have not the least fear. Our right to criticize and condemn the evils of our society and to plead with our people for reform carries with it a corresponding duty to defend them against interested and malicious calumny such as Miss Katherine Mayo's. We have but done our duty. If any Indian hereafter makes use of anything we have said as an excuse or justification for opposing social reforms, we shall know how to deal with him.

APPENDICES

MISS MAYO'S ACCURACY?

I. MISS MARGARET BALFOUR.

Dr. Miss Margaret I. Balfour who has been collecting data for Maternity and Infant Welfare work from the Hospitals in Bombay has contributed the following letter to the *Times of India*, denying the gross allegations in "Mother India":—

I have recently had the opportunity of reading "Mother India", and have been surprised at some of the statements made, especially with reference to child mothers. I have some facts relating to that subject which I have collected in the course of an investigation into the condition of child-birth, and I am asking you to be kind enough to publish them in the hope that they may be of service to anyone who proposes to write a reply to "Mother India." I have notes of 304 Hindu mothers delivered of their first babies in Bombay Hospitals. The average age was 18·7 years. 85·6 per cent. were 17 years or over, 14·4 per cent. were below 17; 14 was the youngest age and there were 3 of that age. I have compared these figures with the reports of the Madras Maternity Hospital for the years 1922-24. 2,312 mothers were delivered of their first babies. The average age was 19·4 years, 86·2 per cent. were 17

years or over and 13·8 per cent. were below 17, 13 was the youngest age. There were 7 mothers aged 13 and 22 mothers aged 14. The Madras figures included not only Hindus but women of other communities also. I have reports of 3,964 cases of child-birth from other parts of India including the North. Of these only 10 were below 15 years of age, 13 was the youngest age. There is no doubt that child-birth sometimes takes place too early in India and even more so that cohabitation commences too early. Legislation is badly needed. But Miss Mayo's words at p 30 of "Mother India" are as follows: 'The Indian girl, in common practice, looks for motherhood nine months after reaching puberty or anywhere between the ages of fourteen and eight. The latter age is extreme, although in some sections, not exceptional, the former is well above the average." I think the figures I have given prove that the cases instanced by Miss Mayo do not in the least represent the common customs of the country.

II. Lala Lajpat Rai.

Miss Katherine Mayo in her chapter headed the Princes of India refers to a "little luncheon party given in Delhi by an Indian friend in order that I might privately hear the opinion of certain Home Rule politicians." She asked them what their plan was for the princes of India when the British had been expelled. "We shall wipe them out." exclaimed one with conviction and all the rest nodded assent." Lala Lajpat Rai has been at pains to investigate the truth of this story. In his article in

the *Bombay Chronicle*, Oct. 12, he writes :—

From enquiries from all the possible people who could have arranged such a party or who could have attended it, I learn that Mr K. C. Roy of the Associated Press arranged a lunch to which a number of Indian gentlemen were invited. The only other Bengali present was Mr. Sen, Mr. K. C. Roy's assistant. Mr. K. C. Roy has assured me that Miss Mayo's story of what transpired at the meeting (if she really refers to that party) is absolutely untrue. Now it is for Miss Mayo to give us the name of her host if this was not the party to which she refers. "Then I recall a little party given in Delhi by an Indian friend in order that I might privately hear the opinion of certain Home Rule politicians. Most of the guests were, like my host. Bengali Hindus belonging to the Western-educated professional class. They had spoken at length on the coming expulsion of Britain from India and on the future in which they themselves would rule the land. 'And what,' I asked, Is your plan for the Princes?' 'We shall wipe them out'! exclaimed one with conviction and all the rest nodded assent." The following letter from Mrs. K. C. Roy will, I am sure, be of interest to my readers.

My dear Lalaji,

Many thanks for your enquiry. We gave a lunch-party to Miss Mayo at Maidens Hotel, Delhi, during her short stay in the Capital. She came to us with excellent introductions. At the lunch there were only two Bengalis, namely my husband and Mr. Sen. All the others were non-Bengalis. Prominent among our guests were Mr. M. A. Jinnah, leader of the Independent Party and Mr. S. Chetty. As I can recollect the discussion ran on Indian constitutional development, her defence, communal harmony, child-welfare and art and culture in Delhi. I do not recollect whether the position of the Indian Princes was discussed. At any rate, I know that there was no discussion as to their being "wiped out"!

Simla, Yours sincerely,
Sept. 7, 1927 DOROTHY ROY.

III. Rev. H. A. Popley.

The Rev. H. A. Popley, writing in the *Indian Witness*, Lucknow, on Miss Katherine Mayo's book *Mother India*, observes :—

"On pages 132 and 133 she gives an account of the Victoria School, Lahore, and quotes, in inverted commas, statements of the Principal Miss Bose. I have consulted this lady and find that a great many of the things printed in inverted commas were never spoken. Further Miss Bose is not of the third generation of an Indian Christian family. The statement, in para three of that page (132), in regard to lower caste children is not accurate and was never made. On the top of page 134 she says that male *pandits* have to teach behind a curtain. Miss Bose informs me that 'Hindu girls are always taught Sanskrit by male *pandits* without purdah,' and that the statement in regard to the pandit of tottering age, *used to be the case 40 years ago*. The third para on page 133 dealing with the aim of the school is quite inaccurate, says Miss Bose; and she adds 'sewing has been an art among Indian women for ages, in reference to Miss Mayo's remark that 'sewing is almost unknown to most of the women of India.' The quotation in inverted commas, on the top of page 134, that 'their cooking in later life, they would never by nature do with their own hands but would leave entirely to filthy servants, whence come much sickness and death ' is entirely imaginary. Miss Bose says in reply to it, 'cooking is done by ladies of every class, even when they have servants. Servants are not filthy in any good house, and certainly not in Hindu houses.'

I have felt it necessary to deal with this rather extensively because it is a case which I have been able to investigate, and here we find an entire lack of appreciation for strict accuracy. It is most likely that in the innumerable quotations given without names the same inaccuracy would be found.

IV. SIR RABINDRANATH TAGORE

The following letter is from the pages of the "Manchester Guardian":

Sir,—May I appeal to your sense of justice and claim a place in your paper for this letter of mine which I am compelled to write in vindication of my position as a representative of India against a most unjustifiable attack?

While travelling in this island of Bali I have just chanced upon a copy of the "New Statesman' of July 16 containing the review of a book on India written by a tourist from America. The reviewer, while supporting with an unctuous virulence all the calumnies heaped upon our people by the authoress, and while calling repeated attention to the common Hindu vice of untruthfulness even amongst the greatest of us, has made public a malicious piece of fabrication, not as one of the specimens picked up from a show-case of wholesale abuse displayed in this or some other book, but as a gratuitous information about the truth of which the writer tacitly insinuates his own personal testimony. It runs as thus: "The poet Sir Rabindranath Tagore expresses in print his conviction that marriage should be consummated before puberty in order to avert the vagaries of female sexual desire."

We have become painfully familiar with deliberate circulation of hideous lies in the West against enemy countries, but a similiar propaganda against individuals, whose countrymen have obvio[illegible]ded the writer by their political aspiratio[illegible] has co[illegible]me as a surprise. If the people of [illegible] United S[illegible] h[illegible] ever made themselves p[illegible] obnoxious to England, it is imaginable h[illegible]w an English wri[illegible] of this type would take a g[illegible] delight in prov[illegible]g, with profuse helps from the news columns in the American journals, thei[illegible] propensity and quote for his support t[illegible] constant indulgence in vicarious-enjoyment of cr[illegible] through cinema pictures. But would he, in the fier[illegible] frenzy of his rheto[illegible]

running amok, dare to make the monstrous accusation, let us say, against the late President Wilson for ever having expressed his pious conviction that the lynching of the negroes was a moral necessity in a superior civilisation for cultivating Christian virtues? Or would he venture to ascribe to Professor Deway the theory that centuries of witch burning have developed in the Western peoples the quick moral sensitiveness that helps them in judging and condemning others whom they do not know or understand or like and about whose culpability they are never in lack of conclusive evidence? But has it been made so easily possible in my case, such a deliberately untruthful irresponsibility in this writer, condoned by the editor, by the fact that the victim was no better than a British subject who by accident of his birth has happened to be a Hindu and not belonging to the Moslem community, which, according to the writer, is specially favoured by his people and our Government?

May I point out in this connection that selected documents of facts generalised into an unqualified statement affecting a whole large population may become in the hands of the tourist from across the sea poison-tipped arrow of the most heinous form of untruth to which the British nation itself may afford a broadly easy target? It is a cunning lie against a community which the writer has used when he describes the Hindus as cow-dung eaters. It is just as outrageous as to introduce Englishmen to those who know them imperfectly as addicted to the cocaine habit because cocaine is commonly used in their dentistry. In Hindu India only in rare cases an exceedingly small quantity of cow dung is used not as an ingredient in their meals, but as a part of the performance of expiatory rites for some violation of social convention. One who has no special interest or pleasure in creating ill-feeling towards the Europeans will, if he is honest, hesitate in describing them, though seemingly with a greater justice than in the other case, as eaters of live creatures or of rotten food, mentioning oyster and cheese for illustration. It

is the subtlest method of falsehood, this placing of exaggerated emphasis upon insignificant details, giving to the exception the appearance of the rule.

* * * * *

The instances of moral perversity when observed in alien surroundings naturally loom large to us, because the positive power of sanitation which works from within and the counteracting forces that keep up social balance are not evident to a stranger, especially to one who has the craving for an intemperate luxury of moral indignation, which very often is the sign of the same morbid pathology seen from behind. When such a critic comes to the East not for truth but for the chuckling enjoyment of an exaggerated self-complacency, and when he underlines some social aberrations with his exultant pencil and glaringly emphasising them out of their context, he goads our own young critics to play the identical unholy game. They also, with the help of the numerous guide books supplied by unimpeachable agency for the good of humanity' explore the dark recesses of Western society, the breeding grounds of nauseous habits and moral filthiness, some of which have a dangerous cover of a respectable exterior; they also select their choice specimens of rottenness with the same pious zeal and sanctimonious pleasure as the foreign models have in besmearing the name of a whole nation with the mud from ditches * * *

And thus is generated the endless vicious circle of mutual recrimination and ever-accumulating misunderstandings that are perilous for the peace of the world. Of course our young critic in the East is under a disadvantage. For the Western peoples have an enormously magnifying organ of a sound that goes deep and reaches far, either when they malign others or defend themselves against accusations which touch them to the quick; whereas our own mortified critic struggles with his unaided lungs that can whisper and sigh but not shout. But is it not known that our inarticulate emotions become highly inflammable when crowded in the under-ground cellars of our mind, darkly silent? The whole of the Eastern

continent is daily being helped in the storage of such explosives by the critics of the West, who with a delicious sense of duty done, are ever ready to give vent to their blind prejudices while tenderly nourishing a comfortable conscience that lulls them into forgetting that they also have their Western analogies in moral licence, only in different garbs made in their fashionable establishments or in their slums. However let me strongly assure my English and other Western readers that neither I nor my indignant Indian friends whom I have with me have ever had the least shadow of intimation of what has been described in this book and quoted with a grin of conviction by this writer as the usual practice in the training of sexual extravagance. I hope such Western readers will understand my difficulty in giving an absolute denial to certain facts alleged when they remember the occasional startling disclosures in their own society in Europe and America, allowing to the unsuspecting public a sudden glimpse of systematic orgies of sexual abnormality in an environment which is supposed not to represent "subhuman" civilisation.

The writer in the "New Statesman" has suggested for the good of the world that the people in India condemned by the tourist for malpractices should never be assisted by the benevolent British soldiers safely to preserve their existence and continue their race. He evidently chooses to ignore the fact that these people have maintained their life and culture without the help of the British soldiers for a longer series of centuries than his own people have. However that may be, I shrink from borrowing my wisdom from this source and make a similarly annihilating suggestion for this kind of writers, who spread about the malignant contagion of race-hatred; because, in spite of provocations, we should have a patient faith in human nature for its unlimited capacity for improvement, and let us hope to be rid of the lurking persistence of barbarism in man, not through elimination of the noxious elements by physical destruction but through the education of mind and a discipline of true culture.

V. MAHATMA GANDHI

Under the title "Drain Inspector's Report" Mahatma Gandhi published in *Young India* (Ahmedabad, for September 15 a review of Katherine Mayo's book "Mother India," from which we print an extract!

"The book is cleverly and powerfully written. The carefully chosen quotations give it the appearance of a truthful book. But the impression it leaves on my mind is, that it is the report of a drain inspector sent out with the one purpose of opening and examining the drains of the country to be reported upon, or to give a graphic description of the stench exhuded by the opened drains If Miss Mayo had confessed that she had gone to India merely to open out and examine the drains of India, there would perhaps be little to complain about her compilation. But she says in effect with a certain amount of triumph 'The drains are India.' True, in the concluding chapter there is a caution. But her caution is cleverly made to enforce her sweeping condemnation I feel that no one who has any knowledge of India can possibly accept her terrible accusations against the thought and the life of the people of this unhappy country.

The book is without doubt untruthful, be the facts stated ever so truthful. If I open out and describe with punctilious care all the stench exhuded from the drains of London and say "Behold London," my facts will be incapable of challenge, but my judgment will be rightly condemned as a travesty of truth. Miss Mayo's book is nothing better, nothing else. * * * The authoress says she was dissatisfied with the literature she read about India, and so she came to India "to see what a volunteer unsubsidized, uncommitted and unattached, could observe of common things in daily human life."

After having read the book with great attention, I regret to say that I find it difficult to accept this

claim. Unsubsidized she may be. Uncommitted and unattached she certainly fails to show herself in any page. We in India are accustomed to interested publications patronised,—'patronised' is accepted as an elegant synonym for 'subsidised,'—by the Govenment. We have become used to understanding from pre-British days, that the art (perfected by the British) of government includes the harnessing of the secret services of men learned, and reported to be honest and honourable for shadowing suspects and for writing up the virtues of the Government of the day as if the certificate had come from disinterested quarters. I hope that Miss Mayo will not take offence if she comes under the shadow of such suspicion. It may be some consolation to her to know that even some of the best English friends of India have been so suspected.

But ruling out of consideration the suspicion, it remains to be seen why she has written this untruthful book. It is doubly untruthful. It is untruthful in that she condemns a whole nation or in her words 'the peoples of India' (she will not have us as one nation) practically without any reservation as to their sanitation, morals, religion, etc. It is also untruthful because she claims for the British Government merits which cannot be sustained and which many an honest British officer would blush to see the Government credited with.

If she is not subsidised, Miss Mayo is an avowed Indophobe and Anglophil refusing to see anything good about Indians and anything bad about the British and their rule.

She does not give one an elevated idea of Western standard of judgment. Though she represents a class of sensational writers in the West, it is a class that, I flatter myself with the belief, is on the wane. There is a growing body of Americans who hate anything sensational, smart or crooked. But the pity of it is that there are still thousands in the West who delight in 'shilling shockers.' Nor are all the authoress's quotations or isolated facts truthfully stated. I propose to pick those I have personal knowledge of. The

book bristles with quotations torn from their contexts and with extracts which have been authoritatively challenged.

The authoress has violated all sense of propriety by associating the Poet's name with child-marriage. The Poet has indeed referred to early marriage as not an undesirable institution. But there is a world of difference between child-marriage and early marriage. If she had taken the trouble of making the acquaintance of the free and freedom-loving girls and women of Shantiniketan, she would have known the Poet's meaning of early marriage.

She has done me the honour of quoting me freequently in support of her argument. Any person who collects extracts from a reformer's diary, tears them from their context and proceeds to condemn, on the strength of these, the people in whose midst the reformer has worked, would get no hearing from sane and unbiassed readers or hearers. But in her hurry to see everything Indian in a bad light, she has not only taken liberty with my writings, but she has not thought it necessary even to verify through me certain things ascribed by her or others to me. In fact she has combined in her own person what we understand in India the judicial and the executive officer. She is both the prosecutor and the judge.

But why am I writing this article? Not for the Indian readers but for the many American and English readers who read these pages from week to week with sympathy and attention. I warn them against believing this book. I do not remember having given the message Miss Mayo imputes to me. The only one present who took any notes at all has no recollection of the message imputed to me. But I do know what message I give every American who comes to see me; "Do not believe newspapers and the catchy literature you get in America. But if you want to know any thing about India, go to India as students, study India *for yourself.* If you cannot go, make a study of all that is written about India for her and against

her and then form your own conclusions. The ordinary literature you get is either exaggerated vilification of India or exaggerated praise" I warn Americans and Englishmen against copying Miss Mayo. She came not with an open mind as she claims, but with her preconceived notions and prejudices which she betrays on every page, not excluding even the introductory chapter in which she recites the claim. She came to India not to see things with her own eyes, but to gather material three fourths of which she could as well have gathered in America.

That a book like Miss Mayo's can command a large circulation furnishes a sad commentary on Western literature and culture.

I am writing this article also in the hope, be it ever so distant, that Miss Mayo herself may relent and repent of having done, I hope unconsciously, atrocious injustice to an ancient people and equally atrocious injustice to the Americans by having exploited her undoubted ability to prejudice without warrant their minds against India.

The irony of it all is that she has inscribed this book 'To the peoples of India'. She has certainly not written it as a reformer, and out of love. If I am mistaken in my estimate let her come back to India. Let her subject herself to cross-examination, and if her statements escape unhurt through the fire of cross examination, let her live in our midst and reform our lives. So much for Miss Mayo and her readers

I must now come to the other side of the picture. Whilst I consider the book to be unfit to be placed before Americans and Englishmen (for it can do no good to them), it is a book that every Indian can read with some degree of profit. We may repudiate the charge as it has been framed by her, but we may not repudiate the substance underlying the many allegations she has made. It is a good thing to see ourselves as others see us. We need not even examine the motive with which the book is written. A cautious reformer may make some use of it.

VI. DITCHER

"Ditcher" writing in the *Capital*, Calcutta, says: —

Miss Katherine Mayo is seemingly conscious of her limitations for she shows a fondness for smoking room stories to eke out her mess of stale kail. Those who told them to her pulled her leg egregiously. Take the following for instance:

'Here is a story from the lips of one whose veracity has never, I believe, been questioned. The time was the stormy period in 1926 when the new Reforms Act was casting doubt over the land and giving rise to the persistent rumour that Britian was about to quit India. My informant, an American of long Indian experience, was visiting one of the more important of the princes—a man of great charm, cultivation and force, whose, work for his Statewas of the first order. The prince's Dewan was also present and the three gentlemen had been talking at ease, as became the old friends that they were.

'His Highness does not believe,' said the Dewan, 'that Britain is going to leave India. But still, under this new regime in England, they may be so ill-advised. So, His Highness is getting his troops in shape, accumulating munitions and coining silver. And if the English do go, three months afterwards not a rupee or a virgin will be left in all Bengal.'

To this His Highness sitting in his capital distant from Bengal by half the breadth of India, cordially agreed. His ancestors through the ages had been predatory Mahratta chiefs.'

I heard the original of that story much better and more racily told more than forty years ago. The actors were Lord Dufferin and Sir Pertab Singh, the gallant Rajput who so often acted as Regent of Jodhpur.

"What would happen if the British left India?" asked the Viceroy.

"What would happen," replied the Rajput warrior, "I would call to my *Jawans* to boot and saddle and in a month there would not be a virgin or a rupee left in Bengal."

I knew Sir Pertab well, and at the Curzonion durbar I asked him if this conversation had ever taken place. "Lie my friend, a damned lie," he answered fiercely. "We, Rajputs, never offend the inoffensive. When we insult our foes we give them the chance to retaliate with the sword." I am tempted to quote Sidney Smith on American gullibility but why libel a nation for the rantings of an eccentric woman?"

THE HON. SIR C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR.

Speaking at Geneva to a group of students from all parts of the Empire who had gathered together for the purpose of visiting Switzerland and also of witnessing the League of Nations at work, the Hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar spoke as follows: —

In order to furnish to outsiders a true picture of Miss Mayo's "Mother India" it is perhaps most useful to employ a figure of speech. Assume that a guest is invited to my house and is shown the drawing room and the living quarters and has the additional opportunity of seeing the garden and its embellishments and assume that when taking leave of the host he catches sight of the open drain in a corner. Assume, moreover, that this person to whom my hospitality has been extended proceeds to write a book about what he has seen and concentrates on the drain and ignores the other features of the house and garden that would be to act as Miss mayo has done. In saying this I do not for a moment ignore or minimise the many social evils and handicaps from which India is suffering. Some of these evils are as old as humanity and some aspect of these evils are as prominent in Europe and America as in India; but every right minded Indian patriot is willing and anxious to right these abuses and is working for their eradication. In such an endeavour Indians have been helped by men and women of other races but amongst such helpers cannot be counted persons like Miss Mayo with filthy minds who in all probability are suffering from inhibited instincts and who have no eyes but for evil, dirt and degradation.

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